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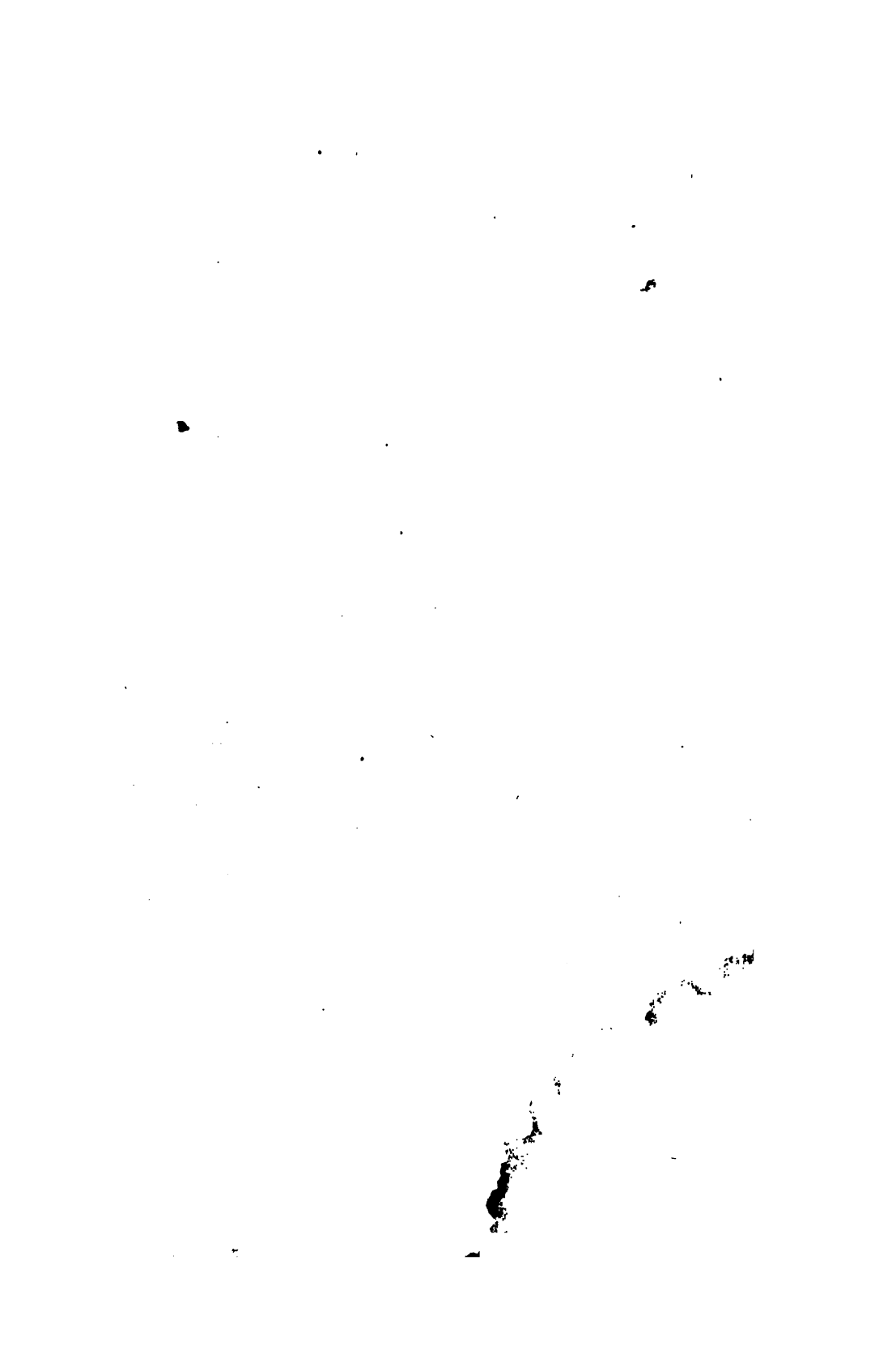
THE

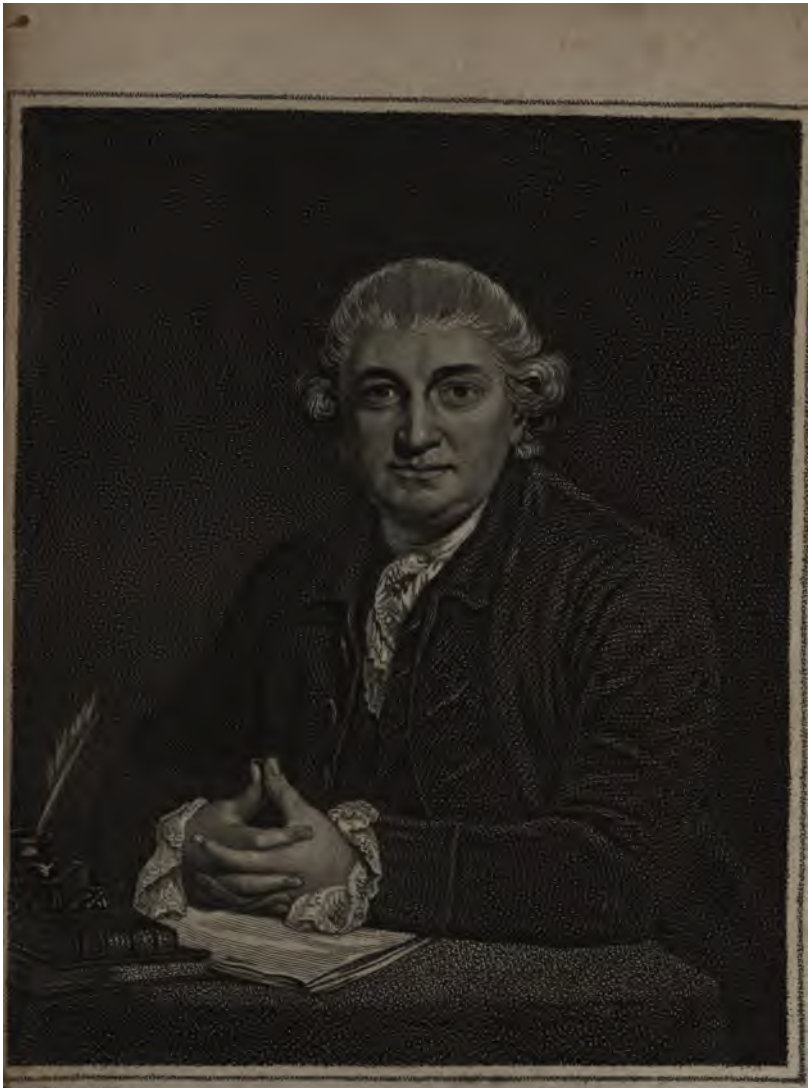
LIFE

OF

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

VOL. I.





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DAVID GARRICK ESQ.R

Pub.d Feb.y 1801 by J. Wright Piccadilly

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THE LIFE OF DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

BY

ARTHUR MURPHY, Esq.

VOL. I.

——————— Neque,
Si chartæ sileant, quod bene feceris,
Mercedem tuleris. Quid foret Iliæ
Mavortisque puer, si taciturnitas
Obstaret meritis invida Romuli?
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TO

THOMAS COUTTS, Esq

Piccadilly, Stratton Street.

SIR,

AMIDST the scenes of important business that attract your attention, the following Work, of a colour so different from your pursuits, will seem to be obtruded upon you with a degree of impropriety. That impropriety will appear still more glaring, when it is added, that this Address has not the sanction of your previous knowledge or permission. The fact is, it occurred to me that,

if I applied for leave, I ſhould not have ſucceeded. A mind like yours, that loves *to do good by ſtealth*, I was ſure, would *blush to find it fame*. But, permit me to ſay, you will have no reaſon to be alarmed: I inſcribe THE LIFE OF GARRICK to you, but not in the uſual ſtile of DEDICATIONS. To that language I have ever been a ſtranger; and even now, however fair the opportunity, I do not mean to trouble you with a panegyric on the virtues, which you are known to poſſeſs. The attempt, I know, would offend your Delicacy.

Luckily, I am called another way; I have now before me the elegant Letter which

which you did me the honour to write to me several months since, on the subject of the following sheets. The Taste and Judgement which appeared in the stile of yours, awakened my attention to the points you recommended. I was not then to learn, that you ever were, even in the hurry of great concerns, a distinguished Lover of polite Literature, and of Dramatic Poetry in particular. I knew that you had made a just estimate of the genius of GARRICK, and was, at the same time, a warm admirer of the wonderful powers of BARRY. I hope, Sir, you will find that I have done some degree of justice to the last, most excellent performer, who cer-

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THE

LIFE

OF

DAVID GARRICK, Esq.

INTRODUCTION.

BIOGRAPHY, or a true account of the lives of men, who were eminent in their time, has been always considered as a pleasing, and most useful branch of polite Literature. It traces the man into his closest retirement; views his conduct in all the relations of life;

discloses his principles, his passions, and, in short, lays the whole character open to our view. History does not afford so instructive a lesson; it does not descend from its dignity, to enter into the scenes of private life; it shews us the person in his public conduct, either acting with integrity, or serving the sinister views of his own ambition. But the entire character is not displayed. Biography supplies this defect. We are told by TACITUS, that in the degenerate age, in which he lived, it was an established custom to record the lives of eminent men, whenever a great character proved superior to the clouds of envy and wilfull ignorance, that too often pursue exalted virtue.

THE same degree of attention to departed merit cannot be said to have flourished in this country. Writers of genius have seen their contemporaries

temporaries pass away with calm indifference, or, at least, with deep silence, deaf to the call of friendship, and altogether neglecting to give due information to the world. The task of doing justice to the memory of the deceased, seems to have been consigned to after-times, when the Biographer must collect his facts from scattered fragments and oral tradition. In this manner it has happened, that the lives of the Poets, who flourished in the last century, were reserved for Dr. Johnson. But a Biographer of his genius cannot often be expected; and, indeed, to let the good and worthy moulder into silent dust, till some great writer shall, at a distant period, open the tomb, and call them forth to their posthumous fame, is a degree of cold neglect that ought to prevail no longer.

By this train of reflection, the present writer has been excited to the task now before him. He was acquainted with Mr. Garrick so early as the latter end of the year 1752, and from that time lived in great intimacy with him to the hour of his death; and now, being at rest from various labours, he resumes his long-intended purpose, willing to pay his tribute of friendship, and, at the same time, of strict justice, to the memory of David Garrick, in a fair, a just, and true account of his conduct in life, with all the lights and shades of the picture, touched with a firm, and impartial hand.

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CHAP. I.

GARRICK's Birth—Account of his Family—His Education at Litchfield, under Mr. HUNTER, *at the Grammar School—His early Love of Plays—Acts Serjeant Kite when Eleven Years old—Is sent to his Uncle, a Merchant at Lisbon—Returns to Litchfield, and is again placed at School with Mr.* HUNTER—*Is removed thence, to finish his Education under* SAMUEL JOHNSON, *who has opened an Academy for Young Gentlemen.*

DAVID GARRICK was born in the city of Hereford, and baptized, as appears by the register in the church of All Souls, on the 20th of February, 1716. He was the grandson of Monsieur Garrick, a merchant in France, who, on the revocation of the Edict of Nantz, fled to England with other emigrants, and

settled in the city. His son, Peter Garrick, obtained a Captain's commission in the army, and was the father of our great English actor. He had fixed his residence at Litchfield, but happened, in the above year, to be on a recruiting party at Hereford, and his wife was brought to-bed at that place. She was the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Clough, one of the Vicars in Litchfield Cathedral. It appears that Capt. Garrick, soon after that time, sold his commission, and retired on half-pay. He continued his residence at Litchfield, managing his slender income with strict œconomy; a man of pleasing manners, and much respected by the best families in the neighbourhood. He trained up his son David with the tenderest care, and sent him, when ten years of age, to the grammar-school, under the tuition of Mr. Hunter, who, we are told, was an odd

odd mixture of the pedant and the sportsman. His young pupil did not apply with diligence to his learning; lively, brisk, and volatile, he played all his little pranks, and to him serious attention was downright drudgery. He soon discovered a turn for mimickry: the strolling actors, who at times visited Litchfield, kindled in his young mind an early love of theatrical performances. What he admired, he soon wished to put into practice; and, with that view, engaged a set of his school-fellows to undertake their several parts in a comedy. He was now the manager of a company. The *Recruiting Officer* was his favourite play. Having drilled his young performers by frequent rehearsals, the play was acted before a select audience in the year 1727. Garrick was then eleven years old. He appeared in the character of *Serjeant Kite*, and, it is said,

acquitted himself with great humour. This was a prelude to the fame that lay in wait for him; a prognostic of our *future Roscius*. In 1729, or 1730, our young actor was sent to his uncle, a thriving wine-merchant at Lisbon; but being found too volatile for a counting-house, he returned home in the following year. His father placed him once more under the care of Mr. Hunter, where his vivacity was superior to serious application. But a lad of his parts was sure to glean and snatch a great deal of school-learning. It happened that in the year 1735, the celebrated Samuel Johnson, a native of Litchfield, formed a design to open an academy for Classical education. He was encouraged to pursue his plan by Gilbert Walmsley, Register of the Ecclesiastical Court, a man of erudition, and an active generous friend. By his advice, Johnson gave notice, by public advertisement, that,

"*At*

" *At Edial, near Litchfield, in Stafford-*
" *shire, young gentlemen were boarded,*
" *and taught the Latin and Greek lan-*
" *guages, by*

" SAMUEL JOHNSON."

Garrick, at that time turned of eighteen, was consigned to Johnson: seven or eight more were all that embraced the opportunity to complete their education. Garrick began to apply himself to the Classics, but the master of the academy grew tired of his undertaking; the servile task of inculcating the rules of grammar and syntax gave him disgust. Having remained in his vocation about a year, he resolved to abandon it altogether. He loitered for some months in his native place, wishing for an ampler scene, and meditating he knew not what prodigious things; like the sportsman described

described by Virgil, who is tired of pursuing small game, and wishes for a nobler chase:

Spumantemque dari pecora inter inertia votis
Optat aprum, aut fulvum descendere monte leonem.

GARRICK at the same time was weary of his situation in a country town. He longed for a more splendid scene, where he might enlarge his views. He and Johnson exchanged sentiments, and resolved on an expedition to the metropolis.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

JOHNSON tired of being a Schoolmaster—GARRICK and He think of setting out for London—Mr. WALMSLEY writes in Favour of GARRICK to the Rev. Mr. COLSON, Master of the School at Rochester—Mr. WALMSLEY'S Second Letter about GARRICK, and also recommending JOHNSON, who is going to London with a Tragedy—GARRICK and JOHNSON arrive together in London—GARRICK is entered a Student at Lincoln's Inn—Goes to Mr. COLSON'S Academy, but returns soon—His Uncle arrives from Lisbon, and dies in London, leaving a Legacy to to his Nephew—GARRICK becomes a Wine-Merchant, in Partnership with his Brother—Death of GARRICK'S Father—and Mother—GARRICK now his own Master—Dissolves the Partnership with his Brother, and determines to become an Actor.

Mr. WALMSLEY was consulted on the occasion. He had a regard for young Garrick, and, wishing that he should complete his education,

tion, wrote to Mr. Colson, a celebrated Mathematician, at that time Master of the School at Rochester, requesting that he would take the pupil, whom he recommended in strong terms, under his tuition. He says of Garrick, "*He* "*is a very sensible young man, and a good* "*scholar; of a sober and good disposition,* "*and as ingenious and promising a young* "*man as ever I knew in my life* *." It appears that Mr. Colson was willing to comply with his friend's request, and accordingly Garrick and Johnson set off for London on the 2d of March 1737. The precise day is ascertained by Mr. Walmsley's second letter of that date†, in which he says, "*Garrick, and an-*"*other neighbour of mine, one Mr. Samuel* "*Johnson, set out this morning for London*

* For the Letter, see the Appendix, No. I.

† See the Appendix, No. II.

"*together.*

" *together. Davy Garrick will be with*
" *you early in the next week, and Mr. John-*
" *son goes to try his fate with a Tragedy,*
" *and to see to get himself employed in*
" *some translation from the Latin or the*
" *French.*"

WITH this recommendation, the two friends sallied out to seek their fortunes. The city of Litchfield had the honour of sending forth on one day the two greatest genius's, in their different walks, that have been known in modern times. Garrick was entered a student of Lincoln's Inn, on the 9th of March 1737, but his finances did not enable him to pursue that profession. Nor did he remove to Rochester, to place himself under Mr. Colson. About the end of the year, his uncle arrived from Lisbon, with intent to settle in London. His design

was

was frustrated by a fit of illness, which, in a short time, put an end to his days. He left his nephew David 1000*l.* and to each of his brothers and sisters the sum of 500*l.* Upon this event, Garrick had recourse to Mr. Colson, and remained several months under that gentleman's patronage. During his stay at Rochester, his father, Capt. Garrick, died of a lingering illness, and his wife did not survive him above a year. They left three sons, Peter the eldest, David and George, and, besides them, two daughters. David Garrick took his leave of Mr. Colson, and returned to the metropolis. Sublime geometry had no attraction for him, whose ruling passion was the dramatic art. The law was likewise too dry a study: the briars and brambles of that science deterred him from thinking any more of Lincoln's Inn. Peter, his eldest brother, had entered

entered into the business of a wine-merchant, and in 1738, David was induced to enter into partnership. The famous Samuel Foote used to say, "He remembered Garrick living in "*Durham-yard,* with three quarts of vinegar "in the cellar, calling himself a wine-mer-"chant." It is certain, however, that he served all the houses in the neighbourhood of the two play-houses, and at those places was a member of different clubs, with the actors of the time. He loved to indulge in a vein of criticism on the several performers, and, to illustrate his remarks, he mounted the table, and displayed those talents for mimickry, for which he has been much celebrated in the character of *Bayes.*

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

*State of the Stage—*GARRICK *makes his first Appearance at Ipswich—His great Success—Resolves to act in the following Winter on a London Stage—Difficulties in his Way—Begins at Goodman's Fields—Richard III. his first Part—The Public see him with Astonishment—The People of Fashion go in Crowds to Goodman's Fields—*QUIN'S *Sarcastic Observation—*GARRICKS *Epigram in Answer to him—The Season closes at Goodman's Fields, after a Tide of great Success.*

FROM this time the profession of an actor was the object of his ambition. The stage, at that period, was in a low condition. Macklin had played *Shylock* with applause, and Quin was, beyond all doubt, a most excellent performer. Mrs. Pritchard, and Mrs. Woffington shone in genteel comedy, and Mrs. Clive made the province

province of humour entirely her own. She deserved to be called the COMIC MUSE. And yet the drama was sunk to the lowest ebb: in tragedy, declamation roared in a most unnatural strain; rant was passion; whining was grief; vociferation was terror, and drawling accents were the voice of love. Comedy was reduced to farce and buffoonery. Garrick saw that nature was banished from the theatre, but he flattered himself that he should be able to revive a better taste, and succeed by the truth of imitation. He was, in consequence, now resolved to launch into the theatrical world, and, accordingly, in the beginning of 1740, he dissolved partnership with his brother Peter Garrick. He passed the remainder of the year in preparation for his great design; he studied the best characters of *Shakespeare* and of our comic writers with all his atten-

tion, but, at last, he was frightened by the difficulties that stood in his way. A new school of acting was to be established, and the attempt, he was aware, would be called innovation. He shrunk back, not being sure of his own power; but the impulse of nature was not to be resisted. His genius drove him on. His friend Mr. Giffard was the manager of the theatre in Goodman's Fields. Garrick consulted him, and, by his advice, determined to make an experiment of himself at a country theatre. The scheme was settled, and they both set out for the city of Ipswich, where, in the summer 1741, there was a regular company of comedians. Garrick's diffidence was still so great, that he assumed the name of Lyddal; and, that he might remain unknown, he chose, for his first appearance, the character of *Aboan*, in the tragedy of *Oroonoko*. In that

that disguise he passed the *rubicon*; but his reception was such, that, in a few days, he ventured to throw off his black complexion, and shew himself in the part of *Chamont*, in the *Orphan*. The applause he met with encouraged him to display his powers in comedy. The inhabitants of Ipswich were not the only attendants at the theatre; the gentlemen, all round the country, went in crowds to see the new performer. Ipswich has reason to be proud of the taste and judgement, with which they gave the warmest encouragement to a promising genius. The people of that city were the first patrons of a young actor, who, in a short time, became the brilliant ornament of the English stage.

GARRICK, from that time, spoke on all occasions of the encouragement he received at Ips-

wich with pride and gratitude. He used to say, that, if he had failed there, it was his fixed resolution to think no more of the stage; but the applause he met with inspired him with confidence. He returned to town before the end of the summer, resolved in the course of the following winter to present himself before a London audience. To gain this point, he concerted all his measures; but the road before him was by no means open. It was necessary to procure a station at one of the theatres. For that purpose, he offered his service to Fleetwood, and after him to Rich. The two managers considered him as a mere strolling actor, a vain pretender to the art, and rejected him with disdain. They had reason, however, in the following season to repent of their conduct. Garrick applied to his friend Giffard, the manager of Goodman's Fields, and agreed

to

to act under his management at a salary of *five pounds* a week. Having gained confidence in his powers from the encouragement he received at Ipswich, he resolved to think no more of subordinate characters, but to strike a bold stroke, and set out at the very head of the profession. The parthe chose was *Richard III.* a great and arduous undertaking. He had studied the character, and his feelings told him, that he should be able to acquit himself with reputation. Old Cibber had long before prepared the play with considerable alterations, and the new matter introduced by him was, with great judgement, selected from *Shakespeare* himself. He acted *Richard* with great applause, and he tells us, he made Sandford his model. He adds, that Sir John Vanbrugh told him, that *" he never knew an actor pro- " fit so much by another : you have the very*

" *look of Sandford, his gesture, gait, speech,*
" *and every motion of him; and you have*
" *borrowed them all to serve you in that character.*" But this borrowing so exactly and minutely from a contemporary actor does not convey the idea of a great tragedian. In fact, Cibber was a most excellent comedian, but by no means qualified for the great emotions of the tragic muse. His voice was feeble, swelling frequently to a drawling tone, and altogether ill-suited to the force and energy of *Richard.* Garrick scorned to lacky after any actor whatever; he depended on his own genius, and was completely an original performer. All was his own creation: he might truly say, " *I am myself alone!*" His first appearance on the London stage, was at Goodman's Fields, on the 19th of October 1741. The moment he entered the scene, the charac-

ter

ter he assumed was visible in his countenance; the power of his imagination was such, that he transformed himself into the very man; the passions rose in rapid succession, and, before he uttered a word, were legible in every feature of that various face. His look, his voice, his attitude, changed with every sentiment. To describe him in the vast variety that occurs in *Richard,* would draw us into too much length. The rage and rapidity, with which he spoke,

> The North!—what do they in the North,
> When they should serve their Sovereign in the West?

made a most astonishing impression on the audience. His soliloquy in the tent-scene discovered the inward man. Every thing he described was almost reality; the spectator thought he heard the hum of either army from camp to camp, and steed threatening steed.

When he started from his dream, he was a spectacle of horror: He called out in a manly tone,

Give me another horse;

He paused, and, with a countenance of dismay, advanced, crying out in a tone of distress,

Bind up my wounds;

and then, falling on his knees, said in the most piteous accent,

Have mercy Heaven!

In all this, the audience saw an exact imitation of nature. His friend Hogarth has left a most excellent picture of Garrick in this scene. He was then on the eve of a battle, and, in spite

of

of all the terrors of conscience, his courage mounted to a blaze. When in Bosworth field, he roared out,

A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!

All was rage, fury, and almost reality. To be convinced of this, the reader needs only to see a most admirable picture of him by Mr. Dance *, whose pencil has given immortal fame to Garrick, and has done equal honour to himself. It is no wonder that an actor thus accomplished made, on the very first night, a deep impression on the audience. His fame ran through the metropolis. The public went in crowds to see a young performer, who came forth at once a complete master of his art. From the polite ends of Westminster the most elegant company flocked to Goodman's Fields, insomuch that from Temple Bar the whole way was co-

* See Appendix, No. XXVIII.

vered

vered with a string of coaches. The great Mr. Pope was drawn from his retreat at Twickenham, and, we are assured, Lord Orrery was so struck with the performance, that he said, "*I am afraid the young man "will be spoiled, for he will have no com-"petitor.*"

In the course of the season at Goodman's Fields, Garrick appeared in a variety of characters; in *Lothario*, *Chamont*, and several parts in comedy, such as *Sharp*, in his own farce of the *Lying Valet*, *Lord Foppington*, *Captain Plume*, and *Bayes* in the *Rehearsal*. About the end of two months, he saw that he was the grand magnetic that drew the town to Goodman's Fields, and, of course, thought that his reward was not in any degree adequate to his services. Giffard was sensible of it, and, from

from that time, agreed to give him half the profits. Flushed with success, Garrick undertook the difficult character of *King Lear*. He was transformed into a feeble old man, still retaining an air of royalty. Quin, at the time, was admired in that character, but to express a quick succession of passions was not his talent. Barry, some years after, ventured to try his strength in this *bow of Ulysses*; and certainly with a most harmonious and pathetic voice was able to affect the heart in several passages, but he could not, with propriety, represent the old king out of his senses. He started, took long and hasty steps, stared about him in a vague wild manner, and his voice was by no means in unison with the sentiment. It was in *Lear's* madness that Garrick's genius was remarkably distinguished. He had no sudden starts, no violent gesticulation; his movements were

were slow and feeble; misery was depicted in his countenance; he moved his head in the most deliberate manner; his eyes were fixed, or, if they turned to any one near him, he made a pause, and fixed his look on the person after much delay; his features at the same time telling what he was going to say, before he uttered a word. During the whole time he presented a sight of woe and misery, and a total alienation of mind from every idea, but that of his unkind daughters. He was used to tell how he acquired the hints that guided him, when he began to study this great and difficult part; he was acquainted with a worthy man, who lived in Leman-street, Goodman's Fields; this friend had an only daughter, about two years old; he stood at his dining-room window, fondling the child, and dangling it in his arms, when it was his misfortune to drop the infant into

into a flagged area, and killed it on the spot. He remained at his window screaming in agonies of grief. The neighbours flocked to the house, took up the child, and delivered it dead to the unhappy father, who wept bitterly, and filled the street with lamentations. He lost his senses, and from that moment never recovered his understanding. As he had a sufficient fortune, his friends chose to let him remain in his house, under two keepers appointed by Dr. Monro. Garrick frequently went to see his distracted friend, who passed the remainder of his life in going to the window, and there playing in fancy with his child. After some dalliance, he dropped it, and, bursting into a flood of tears, filled the house with shrieks of grief and bitter anguish. He then sat down, in a pensive mood, his eyes fixed on one object, at times looking slowly round him,

as

as if to implore compassion. Garrick was often present at this scene of misery, and was ever after used to say, that it gave him the first idea of *King Lear's* madness. This writer has often seen him rise in company to give a representation of this unfortunate father. He leaned on the back of a chair, seeming with parental fondness to play with a child, and, after expressing the most heart-felt delight, he suddenly dropped the infant, and instantly broke out in a most violent agony of grief, so tender, so affecting, and pathetic, that every eye in company was moistened with a gush of tears. There it was, said Garrick, *that I learned to imitate madness*; I copied nature, and to that owed my success in *King Lear*. It is wonderful to tell that he descended from that first character in tragedy, to the part of *Abel Drugger*; he represented the tobacco-

boy

boy in the truest comic stile: no grimace, no starting, no wild geticulation. He seemed to be a new man. Hogarth, the famous painter, saw him in *Richard III.* and on the following night in *Abel Drugger:* he was so struck, that he said to Garrick, "*You are in your element, "when you are begrimed with dirt, or up "to your elbows in blood.*"

THE managers of Drury-Lane, and Covent-Garden played to thin houses, while Garrick drew the town after him; and the actors beheld his prodigious success with an evil eye. Quin, in his sarcastic vein, said, "*This is the wonder "of a day; Garrick is a new religion; the "people follow him as another Whitfield, "but they will soon return to church again.*" The joke was relished, and soon spread through the

the town. Garrick thought it required an answer: he replied in the following Epigram:

Pope Quin, who damns all Churches but his own,
Complains that Heresy infests the town;
That Whitfield Garrick has misled the age,
And taints the sound religion of the Stage.
He says, that Schism has turn'd the Nation's brain,
But eyes will open, and to Church again,
Thou grand infallible! forbear to roar;
Thy Bulls and Errors are rever'd no more.
When Doctrines meet with general approbation,
It is not Heresy, but Reformation.

Quin was now, like his own *Falstaff*, not only witty in himself, but the cause of wit in others. The lines contain more truth than is generally found in Epigrams. Garrick's stile of acting was universally acknowledged to be a reformation. He was the undoubted master of the *sock* and *buskin*. He aspired also to the

the rank of a dramatic writer, and to the *Lying Valet*, which had been performed with applause, he added the farce of *Lethe*, in which he acted three different characters. In the month of May 1741, he closed the season at Goodman's Fields, after a career of the most brilliant success.

CHAP. IV.

GARRICK *invited to Act in the Summer Months on the Dublin Stage—He sets off in Company with* MRS. WOFFINGTON—*Her Character*—GARRICK'S *Reception in* RICHARD III. KING LEAR, &c. &c.—*An Epidemic Fever in Dublin—On Account of the Crowded Audiences at the Theatre, it was called the* Garrick Fever—*The Name of* ROSCIUS *given to him in Dublin, in a Copy of Verses.*

HIS fame was not confined to the metropolis. It spread all over England, and soon found its way to Ireland. The managers of the Dublin Theatre sent their proposals, inviting him to perform with them during the summer months. He agreed to the terms, and, in the beginning of June, set out on his expedition.

dition. He travelled in company with Mrs. Woffington, a celebrated actress, in the bloom of youth, possessed of a fine figure, great beauty, and every elegant accomplishment. Her understanding was superior to the generality of her sex. Forgive her one female error, and it might fairly be said of her, that she was adorned with every virtue: honour, truth, benevolence, and charity, were her distinguishing qualities. Her conversation was in a stile of elegance, always pleasing, and often instructive. She abounded in wit, but not of that wild sort, which breaks out in sudden flashes, often troublesome and impertinent. Her judgement restrained her within due bounds. On the stage she displayed her talents in the brightest lustre. Genteel comedy was her province. *Angelica*, in *Love for Love*; *Maria*, in the *Non-juror*; *Mrs. Sullen*, in the *Stratagem*; and many

others of that class, were the parts that she adorned with all the graces of action. Above all, *Sir Harry Wildair* raised her to the summit of fame. Wilkes had shone in that character without a rival. In twelve years after him, Mrs. Woffington undertook the part, and the actors, even Garrick himself, made a voluntary resignation to Mrs. Woffington. She was the only *Sir Harry Wildair* during the remainder of her life. Her figure was in perfect symmetry; her deportment graceful and sufficiently manly. She used to relate, with gaiety and good humour, an anecdote that occurred between herself and Quin. On one of the nights, when she performed *Sir Harry*, she finished a scene with a prodigious thunder of applause, and, running into the Green Room, elate with joy, found Quin sitting there. "*Mr. Quin*," said she, "*I have played this*

"*part*

" *part so often, that half the town believe* " *me to be a real man:*" Quin, in his rough stile made answer, " *Madam, the other half* " *know you to be a woman.*" In relating this, Mrs. Woffington laughed most heartily, and made the best apology for Quin's Saturnine humour. This, I am afraid, is too long a digression from Garrick: but I was willing to seize the opportunity, and offer the best tribute in my power to the memory of Mrs. Woffington, with whom I had the pleasure of being acquainted, about five years before her death, which happened in the month of March 1760. I esteemed and honoured her for her excellent qualities, and I now say, with heartfelt sincerity, *longum formosa vale!*

With that accomplished actress, Garrick visited Dublin. They appeared together in

several comedies, and were received with unbounded applause. In tragedy Garrick was considered as a phænomenon. His powers in *Richard* and *King Lear* were seen with delight and astonishment. When on the following night he descended to the tobacco-boy, the public were convinced that there was nothing in human life that such a genius was not able to represent in the most striking, the most true, and genuine stile of imitation. Terror and pity are, in Dr. Young's language, the two pulses of tragedy, and of those he had the absolute command, to such a degree, that he raised and sunk them, inflamed, and hurried their motions, at his will and pleasure. From the noblest passions, he could descend to the various foibles of mankind, and, by the force of ridicule, excite the sensation of mirth and laughter. The people of rank and fashion were

were constant attendants at the theatre, and the public went in crowds whenever he performed. The weather happened to be so intensely hot, that an epidemic disorder reigned in every quarter of the town. This was called the *Gàrrick fever*. Towards the beginning of August he returned to England, full of sentiments of gratitude for the reception he had met with. The name of *Roscius* was given to him in Dublin, in a Copy of Verses, which began

> Roscius, Paris of the Stage,
> Born to please a learned age!

The fame, which resounded through all England, and had followed him to Ireland, was echoed back from the Liffy to the banks of the Thames.

CHAP. V.

GARRICK engages with FLEETWOOD for the following Season at Drury-Lane—Meets with universal Applause in LEAR, RICHARD, and a Variety of Characters—He appears for the First Time in HAMLET—Some Account of that Play—GARRICK's great Success in the Part—Plays in FIELDING's Comedy of, the WEDDING DAY—Acts BAYES in the REHEARSAL—Account of that Play—GARRICK greatly admired in that Character—He mimicks some of the principal Actors of that Day—The Passages selected by GARRICK for that Purpose.

GARRICK arrived in London crowned with laurels. Fleetwood, the manager of Drury-Lane, was now convinced, that he was not a mere upstart in his profession, but a most extraordinary genius. Another campaign at Good-

Goodman's Fields filled him with apprehensions. He therefore resolved to add an accession of strength to his own theatre, and accordingly opened a negociation with Garrick. The treaty was soon concluded, on a salary of 500*l.* which was more than ever had been given before. Giffard and his wife were engaged by Fleetwood, at Garrick's desire, as also Mr. Havard, and the best performers who had studied under *Roscius* at Goodman's Fields. Garrick was no longer, according to Quin's decree, the *Whitfield* of the stage, but acknowledged to be the *orthodox teacher* of true and just imitation. The new arrangement was soon known, and all degrees and ranks throughout the city of Westminster heard with pleasure that a long journey to their favourite amusement would be no longer necessary.

From September 1742, to June 1743.

THIS was Garrick's first season at Drury-Lane. His ambition was highly gratified. He appeared on the boards of a theatre, of which, even then, he flattered himself that he should in time be the manager and proprietor. He was prepared in a variety of characters, and the public were entertained, in regular succession, with *Chamont, Lothario, Pierre,* in *Venice Preserved, Hastings,* in *Jane Shore,* and many others. *Richard* and *King Lear* were his great parts without a competitor; for Quin, though he did not immediately resign those characters, was not able to contend for victory. Garrick was eager to bring forward Shakespeare's first-rate characters, and, accordingly, *Hamlet* was added to his list. That tragedy is written in Shakespeare's wildest manner, but, at the same time, with all the fire

fire and energy of a superior genius. The scenes are changed with a wonderful variety of serious, comic, and pathetic incidents, so artfully conducted, that they follow one another in a regular series, with due subordination, and the most perfect connection. Lord Shaftsbury's account of this play deserves to be inserted in this place. The Noble author says, "*Our old dramatic poet may witness for* "*our good ear and manly relish. Not-* "*withstanding his natural rudeness, his* "*unpolished stile, his antiquated phrase* "*and wit, his want of method and cohe-* "*rence, and his deficiency in almost all the* "*graces and ornaments of this kind of* "*writing; yet, by the justness of his moral,* "*the aptness of many of his descriptions,* "*and the plain and natural turn of several* "*of his characters, he pleases his audience,*

"*and*

" and often gains their ear, without a single
*" bribe from luxury and vice. That Piece**
" of his, which appears to have most affect-
" ed English hearts, and has, perhaps, been
" oftenest acted of any, which have come
" upon our stage, is almost one continued
" moral; a series of deep reflections, drawn
" from one mouth, upon the subject of one
" single accident and calamity, naturally
" fitted to move horror and compassion. It
" may properly be said of this Play, if I
" mistake not, that it has only ONE CHA-
" RACTER, or principal part. It contains
" no adoration or flattery of the sex; no
" ranting at the gods; no blustering HERO-
" ISM; nor any thing of that curious mix-
" ture of FIERCE *and* TENDER, *which make*

* The Tragedy of Hamlet.

" the

"*the hinge of modern tragedy, and nicely*
"*vary it between the points of* LOVE *and*
"HONOUR."

To do justice to such a character, it was necessary that the talents of the actor should be as various as those of his great master. When Garrick entered the scene, the character he assumed, was legible in his countenance; by the force of deep meditation he transformed himself into the very man. He remained fixed in a pensive attitude, and the sentiments that possessed his mind could be discovered by the attentive spectator. When he spoke, the tone of his voice was in unison with the workings of his mind, and as soon as he said, "*I have that within me which sur-*
"*passes shew,*" his every feature confirmed and proved the truth. The soliloquy, that begins

gins with, "*O that this too, too solid flesh* "*would melt,*" brings to light, as it were by accident, the character of *Hamlet*. His grief, his anxiety, and irresolute temper, are strongly marked. He does not as yet know that his father was poisoned, but his mother's marriage excites resentment and abhorrence of her conduct. He begins with it, but as Smith observes in his excellent notes on *Longinus*, he stops for want of words. Reflections crowd upon him, and he runs off in commendation of his deceased father. His thoughts soon turn again to his mother; in an instant he flies off again, and continues in a strain of sudden transitions, taking no less than eighteen lines to tell us, that in less than two months, his mother married his father's brother, "*But no more like his father, than he to Hercules.*" In all these shiftings of the passions, his voice

and

and attitude changed with wonderful celerity, and, at every pause, his face was an index to his mind. On the first appearance of the ghost, such a figure of consternation was never seen. He stood fixed in mute astonishment, and the audience saw him growing paler and paler. After an interval of suspence, he spoke in a low trembling accent, and uttered his questions with the greatest difficulty. An attempt to trace him through the whole play, would lead to a long dissertation. His directions to the players were given *con amore*. He thought it a lecture on his own school of acting, and certainly had in his eye some performers of that day, when he said, "*There be players* "*that I have seen play, and heard others* "*praise, and that highly,—not to speak it* "*prophanely, that having neither the accent* "*of Christian, Pagan, or man, have so*

"*strutted*

" strutted, and bellowed, that I thought " some of nature's journeymen made men, " and not made them well, they imitated " humanity so abominably." It will be easily conceived, that he, who so perfectly represented the real madness of *Lear*, should know how to assume the counterfeit appearance of it in his interview with *Ophelia*. The closet-scene with his mother was highly interesting, warm, and pathetic. He spoke daggers to her, till her conscience turned her eyes inward on her own guilt. In the various soliloquies, which have never been equalled by any writer, ancient or modern, Garrick proved himself the proper organ of Shakespeare's genius.

In February 1743, the famous Henry Fielding produced a comedy, called the *Wedding Day*.

Day. The author of *Joseph Andrews* raised the highest expectation, but the public were disappointed. It was universally pronounced the worst of all his dramatic works, and met with indifferent success, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Garrick and Mrs. Woffington. It was acted six nights, and then laid aside for ever. There is no pleasure in pointing out the errors of so eminent a writer. The great æra of his fame was not yet arrived; it was reserved for *Tom Jones,* when Fielding's admirable humour blazed out with a degree of splendour superior to all who have since entered the lists with him. With regard to the *Wedding Day,* I beg leave to refer to what I have said in an Essay on the life and genius of Henry Fielding. It may be proper to observe, that he ushered his play to the audience

with a very humourous prologue*, spoken by Mr. Macklin.

GARRICK's exertions were not confined to tragedy. He diversified the entertainments of the theatre with a number of comic characters with such success, that the critics began to doubt, whether he did not shine most in the service of the comic muse. The play of the *Rehearsal* was in great vogue, and often repeated. The public taste was reformed. They knew that the Duke of Buckingham had levelled his humour and his fine vein of ridicule against the wild, unnatural, and bombast poets of a former day, who wrote with a lofty disregard of all the rules of regular composition, and, as he says in his prologue, " *In spite of Reason,*

* See the Appendix No. III.

" *Nature,*

"*Nature, Art, and Wit.*" The passages selected from a number of plays, and exposed to ridicule, plainly shew that Sir Robert Howard, Sir William Davenant, the great Dryden, and their followers, produced nothing but monstrous farces, which they chose to call heroic tragedies, and by their fustian stile, the tumour of their verse, their ranting characters, and their ferocious tyrants strutting, bellowing, and braving the gods, they aimed at nothing, but, as *Bayes* expresses it, to "*elevate and* "*surprise.*" To see that fashionable strain of nonsense, with the tumour of unnatural expression, and the chaos of extravagant events and incidents, exploded with derision, and banished from the stage, was the delight, not only of the best critics, but of the whole metropolis. To the Duke of Buckingham's admirable satire, Garrick was able to make a con-

siderable, and, indeed, requisite addition. The actors had lost all judgement; the vicious taste of the poets introduced a total departure from nature; and, to vie with their authors, the best performers of the day had recourse to strutting, mouthing, and bellowing. This was altogether repugnant to Garrick's school of acting, and, accordingly, he seized the opportunity to make the *Rehearsal* a keen and powerful criticism on the absurd stile of acting that prevailed on the stage. In the character of *Bayes* he exhibited to the life the vain coxcomb, who had the highest conceit of himself, and thought the art of dramatic poetry consisted in strokes of surprise and thundering versification. The players of his day he saw were equally mistaken. In order, therefore, to display their errors in the most glaring light, he took upon him occasionally to check the performers, who were rehearsing

hearsing his play, and teach them to deliver their speech in what he called the true theatrical manner. For this purpose, he selected some of the most eminent performers of the time, and, by his wonderful powers of mimickry, was able to assume the air, the manner, and the deportment of each in his turn. Delane was at the head of his profession. He was tall and comely; had a clear and strong voice, but was a mere declaimer. Garrick began with him: he retired to the upper part of the stage, and drawing his left arm across his breast, rested his right elbow on it, raising a finger to his nose, and then came forward in a stately gait, nodding his head, as he advanced, and, in the exact tone of Delane, spoke the following lines:

So boar and sow, when any storm is nigh,
Snuff up, and smell it gath'ring in the sky.

Boar beckons sow to trot in chesnut groves,
And there cousummate their unfinished loves,
Pensive in mud they wallow all alone,
And snort, and gruntle to each other's moan.

Hale was a performer at Covent-Garden; a tall and handsome figure, with an extensive and melodious voice, and, in the tender and pathetic, thought to be without a rival. The lovers of course were assigned to him, and his manner of acquitting himself in those parts attracted the notice of *Mr. Bayes.* He chose a speech suited to the occasion, and, in a soft plaintive accent, without any thing like real feeling, *vox et præterea nihil,* he gave an exact representation of Mr. Hale:

How strange a captive am I grown of late!
Shall I my Love accuse, or blame my fate?
My love I cannot; that is too divine!
And against fate what mortal dares repine?

Ryan

Ryan was also engaged at Covent-Garden: he was a veteran in the service of the drama. His name appears in the list of performers prefixed to Addison's *Cato* in the character of *Portius*. We are told, that in a scuffle at a tavern, he received an injury in his jaw, which altered his articulation. He was by no means void of feeling, but a croaking drawling accent gave an unnatural sound to his elocution. Notwithstanding this defect, he was deemed a first-rate actor. Garrick thought him a subject for animadversion, and accordingly, gave a true imitation of his manner in the following speech, delivered in a tremulous raven tone of voice.

Your bed of love from dangers I will free,
And most from love of any future bee;
And when your heart-strings shall with pity crack,
With empty arms I'll bear you on my back,
A pick-a-pack, a pick-a-pack.

In this manner he exposed the fashionable errors of the time, and, of course, made way for his own just and correct idea of dramatic imitation. Whether he burlesqued any actor besides those three, this writer has not been informed. It is certain, however, that he never attempted to mimick Quin. He considered him, in the characters that suited him, such as *Cato, Ventidius, Pierre, Horatio,* and, above all, *Sir John Falstaff,* as a legitimate and excellent performer. But Quin, with all his merit, was not able to make head against the genius and wonderful variety of the man, whom he had called the *Whitfield* of the stage. Drury-Lane flourished every night, and Fleetwood, when he closed his house, had reason to be pleased with his treasurer's accounts.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

GARRICK *engaged for a second Season at Drury-Lane—Meets with strong Opposition on the first Night of his Appearance—Quarrel between him and* MACKLIN—*Account of the Cause and Origin of that Dispute—*MACKLIN *publishes his Case, written for him by* CORBYN MORRIS—GARRICK'S *Answer, written for him by* GUTHRIE, *the Historian—*GARRICK *not suffered to utter a Word of the Character of* BAYES—*Violent Riot—*MACKLIN'S *Party filled the House—They gave the Law, and carried every thing their own Way—*GARRICK'S *Friends protect him at his next Appearance—*MACKLIN'S *Faction overcome, and driven out of the Pit—*GARRICK *restored, and the Contest ends.*

From September 1743, to June 1744.

THIS season did not open in a manner that promised to the public a calm enjoyment of their favourite amusements. A cloud had been gathering

ing during the summer, and soon broke out in storms and tempests. The state of the theatre was rent and torn by violent dissentions, and it was some time before peace and good order were restored. It will be proper, in this place, to trace those disorders to their source, that the reader may be enabled to decide on the conduct of the parties, and see to whom the blame is to be imputed,

The enquiry, as it happens, will not be attended with any difficulty, as the facts can be ascertained by the best and clearest evidence. A gentleman of eminence in the literary world, who has had the diligence to collect a variety of documents and curious papers for a long time past, has been so obliging as to furnish me with the cases that were published in the heat of a violent dispute between Macklin and Garrick.

Garrick. When I add, that Mr. Isaac Reed is the friend, to whom I am obliged for the documents now before me, the fund of knowledge, which he possesses, and the readiness with which he is, at all times, willing to communicate useful information, are, to his honour, universally known. Having examined the vouchers thus confided to me, I proceed to a concise and exact statement of the facts.

It appears that Fleetwood, at the close of the last season, had formed a design to lower the salaries of the principal performers, and, for that purpose, communicated his design to Macklin, who had considerable influence over the mind of Mr. Garrick. Macklin told the public, that the manager promised him a present of *two hundred* pounds upon that occasion; but Fleetwood openly denied that he had made

made any such offer. It may be fairly asked, is it probable that Macklin, in his then circumstances, receiving for himself and his wife a salary of nine pounds a week, would have rejected the proposal? He thought proper to revolt from Fleetwood, and to link himself as closely as possible with Garrick, whom he knew to be a great and popular actor. Garrick expressly says, that in the summer he entered into an engagement with Macklin to do their utmost to withstand any oppression of the manager against the players, and to set up a new company, if possible, and that they both resolved to act together. That plan did not succeed. A number of the performers, not less than ten or a dozen, thought themselves aggrieved. Macklin thought it of moment to make common cause with them: he invited them to enter into a general confederacy, and caused

caused the agreement of the whole party to be reduced to writing. An embodied phalanx was thus drawn up against the manager, who had notice early in September, that none of the junto would act under him, if he did not accede to their terms. Fleetwood stood at bay. The performers flattered themselves that Garrick would have weight enough to obtain a licence for the Little Theatre, in the Haymarket; but the Lord Chamberlain was deaf to their petition. Fleetwood remained inflexible; and, by consequence, the actors who had joined the combination, were alarmed for themselves. They desired Garrick to wave their demands, and get them restored to their station in the theatre. Application was accordingly made, and Fleetwood declared himself willing to receive the whole party, except Macklin, whom he declared guilty of base ingratitude,

gratitude, after the favours he had done him, when he was tried at the Old Bailey, on a charge of murder, committed during the play, at Drury-Lane, on the person of Thomas Hallam. This is mentioned by Macklin himself in his printed case. In answer to the charge, he says, he did not apprehend, because a gentleman acted towards him with humanity in his distress, that, therefore, he had an absolute right to load him with oppression during his life: he adds, that he should always bear a thankful remembrance of all Mr. Fleetwood's favours upon that melancholy occasion. The manager considered him as the ringleader of the conspiracy; and when we find Macklin complaining of oppression, there can be little doubt of Fleetwood's assertion. To pacify the manager, Garrick offered to play for a hundred guineas less than he received for the former season,

season, if Macklin was received. The offer was made without effect. Garrick then informed Macklin, that he had prevailed on Rich to engage his wife at three pounds a week, and, at the same time, offered to pay Macklin himself six pounds a week, as a consideration for his being out of business, and was even willing to allow him more, if his friends did not think it enough, till he could reconcile him with the manager. This proposal was refused. In that case, what was Garrick to do? The distresses of the players who were unemployed, grew more urgent every day. They heard that Garrick had thoughts of going to Dublin, and, in that event, they saw that they were to be entirely excluded from the theatre. In this melancholy crisis, they wrote a civil and pathetic letter to Macklin, requesting him to abate a little of his own convenience to the interests

interests of so many people, who pleaded the reasonableness of their cause, in opposition to the pride and obstinacy of one man. On the following day they sent a letter to Garrick, requesting that he would not go with Macklin to Ireland, as, by consequence, they were all to fall a sacrifice. In their letter to Macklin, they observed, with great propriety, that the same ties of honour (if there were any) that bound Mr. Garrick to him, subsisted in equal force towards them. Of this truth Garrick was sensible; and he, therefore, resolved to comply with the petition of numbers in distress, rather than yield to the selfish pride and stubborn arrogance of one man. Fleetwood received the several performers into his company; and Garrick closed his agreement. He was announced in the play-bills, to appear in the character of *Bayes*, on the 5th December

1743.

1743. On that very day was published, for the first time, *The Case of Charles Macklin, Comedian.* All that Garrick could do in that pressing exigence, was to disperse a hand-bill, stating, that an appeal to the town, published that very day, contained many false and injurious aspersions, calculated merely to prejudice him that night; and, therefore, requesting of the public to suspend their judgment, till he should, in a day or two, present a fair account of the whole transaction. Nothing, however, could prevent the fury of an enraged party. A club, at the Horn Tavern, in Fleet-Street, adopted Macklin's quarrel, under the influence of Doctor Barrowby, a man at that time in great vogue for his brilliant wit, and a determined enemy of Garrick, His influence was such, that a large party was formed, and went in crowds to the play-house. Garrick appeared

in the part of *Bayes*, but was not suffered to speak. *Off! off!* resounded from all parts of the house. The play went on in dumb shew, scene by scene, from the beginning to the end; Garrick, during the whole, standing aloof, at the upper part of the stage, to avoid the rotten eggs and apples, which showered down in great plenty. Macklin had a complete triumph, but it did not last long. Garrick was eager to send forth a vindication of himself. He knew that Corbyn Morris, the author of an ingenious essay *On Wit, Humour, Raillery, and Ridicule*, had held the pen for Macklin, and, at the desire of the Horn Tavern club, wrote his case. Guthrie, the historian, entered the lists against him, and with great dispatch, in a plain stile, drew up Garrick's answer, which was published on the 7th December 1743. In two days after, the play

play of the *Rehearsal* was advertised. It was well known that a strong party was formed against it; but Garrick had an eminent and generous friend, who was resolved to protect him; that was Mr. Wyndham, of Norfolk, a gentleman of the most polished manners, and an elegant scholar. It happened that he was an admirer of the athletic art, which at that time was in great vogue; and, having selected thirty of the ablest in that line, he desired of Fleetwood that they might be admitted into the house, by a private way, before the doors were regularly opened. This was granted. The bruizers took possession of the middle of the pit. When the last music was playing, one of them stood up, and stopping the band in the orchestra, said, in a loud voice, "Gentlemen, I am told "that some persons here are come with an in- "tention not to hear the play; I came to hear

" it; I paid my money for it, and I desire that " they who came to interrupt, may all with- " draw, and not stay to hinder my diversion." This occasioned a general uproar; but the Broughtonians knew how to deal their blows with irresistible vigour. They fell upon Macklin's party, and drove them out of the pit. The fray was soon over, and peace and good order being restored, Garrick made his appearance; and, after bowing respectfully to the audience, went through the character of *Bayes*, without interruption. Macklin, it seems, did not think his cause was desperate: he returned to the charge; and, on the 12th December, issued out a *Reply* to Mr. Garrick's Vindication of himself. Whether Corbyn Morris had any hand in that production, or who were coadjutors in the work, I have not heard; but my information says, it fell dead-born from the

the press. It is a long declamation, in a stile of bitter invective, without any thing like proof, or conclusive argument. The public clearly saw that Macklin's ingratitude to Fleetwood was the sole cause of his exclusion from the theatre; and they further saw a man of a most inflexible temper, rejecting the fair and liberal terms offered to him, and, to gratify his own inordinate passions, struggling to draw Garrick with him to Ireland, though it was evident that such a measure would be the ruin of the actors who remained unemployed. The controversy ended here, and Macklin was left to enjoy the triumph of having the last word*. The public were glad to see a conclusion of the contest, and to have their favourite actor restored to the unmolested exercise of his talents.

* For the papers published by both parties, see the Appendix, No. IV.

CHAP. VII.

GARRICK *in the Character of* MACBETH—Sir WILLIAM DAVENANT'S *Alteration of that Play had kept Possession of the Stage—It was now revived as written by* SHAKESPEARE—*Parties formed against* GARRICK *before he acted the Part, but all in vain*—GARRICK'S *Performance triumphed over all Malignity—Observations on the Play—Account of* GARRICK'S *Manner of Acting the Part, and* Mrs. PRITCHARD *in* LADY MACBETH.

(1744)

IN the month of January following, Garrick resolved to adorn his brow with another laurel from the immortal Shakespeare. *Macbeth* was the object of his ambition. The character he knew was entirely different from all he had ever acted, but the various situations, the rapid succession of events, the scenes of terror,

and

and the sudden transition of conflicting passions, form altogether such a wonderful contrast, that Garrick saw it would call forth all his powers. Paragraphs in the newspapers gave notice of his intention to revive *Macbeth* as originally written by Shakespeare. The players had been long in possession of Sir William Davenant's alteration, and content with that, they enquired no further. Even Quin, who had gained reputation by his performance of the character, cried out, with an air of surprize, "What does he mean? don't I play *Macbeth* as written by Shakespeare?" So little was the attention of the actors to ancient literature. A paper war was immediately begun by the small wits. Garrick was easily alarmed. To blunt the edge of ill-timed and previous criticism, he published an anonymous pamphlet, written in a stile of irony against

himself, and prefixed as a motto, "*Macbeth* "*has murdered Garrick.*" This attack was followed by a number of scribblers, who had not patience to wait for the day of trial. Garrick's sensations were quick and irritable, but his resolution was firm and unaltered, as if he said with *Benedick*, "*Shall quips, and sen-* "*tences, and paper-bullets of the brain awe* "*a man from the career of his humour?*" At length he took the field, confiding in his own powers, and bidding defiance to the malice of his enemies.

THE tragedy of *Macbeth* has been generally deemed an extravagant composition, but it may be pronounced one of the best of Shakespeare's works. The rules of the drama, if we except those of time and place, are sufficiently observed. The action is carried on in such a connect-

ed

ed train of events, that it appears to be one and entire, that is to say, the guilt of *Macbeth*, and the consequences ending in his final destruction. Through the whole piece, the incidents grow out of one another, and proceed in a regular series, seeming to retard, but at the same time hurrying forward, to the catastrophe. *Macbeth's* character is well drawn by his wife, who says,

——————— Thy nature
Is too full o' th' milk of human kindness.
——————— Thou would'st be great,
Ar't not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it. What thou would'st highly,
That would'st thou holily. Would'st not play false,
And yet would'st wrongly win.

Such is the man. To act on a mind like his *Lady Macbeth* employs her wicked arts, and the machinery of the witches is introduced.

This

This expedient Corneille, Racine, and Voltaire, would have thought beneath the dignity of tragedy. As managed by Shakespeare it rises to a most important fiction. It is the magic of our immortal bard. The witches make so deep an impression, that from the beginning to the end, we believe them to be supernatural agents. The poet who derives his fable from a remote age, is bound to follow the manners, the opinions, and prejudices, that prevailed in that distant period. When we look into history, we find that in Asia, Africa, Greece, and Rome, impostors were believed to have secret commerce with the next world, and to have an insight into futurity. The dreams of men, who lay stretched in some temple on the skins of slaughtered victims, were considered as light divine and prophecy. The soothsayers drew their prognostics from the flight of birds, the rumbling

rumbling of thunder, and the entrails of beasts offered as a sacrifice. Tasso, in his celebrated poem, abounds with magic and pretended revelations of the will of heaven. The crusade seems to have been the æra of enchantments, and the illusions of necromancy. The adventurers, who displayed their zeal and courage in the holy wars, were firm believers in the doctrine then established. It was the creed of Christians no less than of the Saracens. On their return home, they brought with them that gloomy superstition, which spread with wonderful progress all over Europe. In England and Scotland, it was not confined to magicians and men versed in the occult sciences; it descended to old women, and witchcraft grew into a system universally believed. James I. before his accession to the throne of England, published a book on the subject, intitled *Dæmonologie*.

In

In this work, his Majesty set forth the various practices of witches, their pretended compacts with evil spirits, with all their sorcery and delusive arts. This dissertation was re-printed in England, and made such an impression, that Parliament in the first year of his reign, passed an act, by which witchcraft was made a capital crime. The mischief, however, had taken deep root, and was not easily eradicated. So late as the year 1657, a witch was tried at Bury St. Edmunds, before that great and learned man, Sir Matthew Hale. She was found guilty, and suffered death pursuant to the sentence of the law.

Our great poet, whose scene lay in an age of darkness and barbarism, has given a draught of the opinions and customs that prevailed in ancient times, and remained in full force, when he

he formed the plan of his tragedy. His witches, therefore, are introduced with the utmost propriety. They are not imaginary beings; they existed in the world. No French poet would dare to hazard such a phænomenon. It was reserved for a greater genius. "That noble "extravagance of fancy," says Mr. Addison, "which he had in so great perfection, tho- "roughly qualified him, to touch this weak "superstitious part of his reader's imagination, "and made him capable of succeeding, where "he had nothing to support him, besides the "strength of his own genius. There is some- "thing so wild, and yet so solemn, in the "speeches of his witches, that we cannot for- "bear thinking them natural, though we have "no rule, by which to judge of them, but "must confess, it looks highly probable they "should talk and act, as he has represented "them."

" them." Witches, we have seen, still existed in Shakespeare's time. Their language and incantations have a solemnity, that gives to every mind the idea of preternatural agents, that could look into the seeds of time. Their first prediction to *Macbeth* in a short time is verified, and by that spark, the flame of ambition is kindled, though he shudders at the thought of committing murder. He is ambitious, but irresolute; it remains for his wife to pour her spirit into his ear, in order to make sure of the golden sound, which had been promised by the *Witches*. After hearing *Lady Macbeth*, he debates with himself; he has no dread of the Supreme Being, but, if the blow could be the consummation of all in this world, he is willing to jump the life to come. The consequences on this side of the grave are all that alarm him:

Even-

——————— Even-handed justice
Returns th' ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips.

He still is urged on by vaulting ambition. In the whole soliloquy we have a most important moral, which Juvenal has inculcated with his usual energy:

Nam scelus intra se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.

The mind that hesitates, and yet deliberates, grows by degrees familiar with the horror of the deed, and in the end is reconciled to it.

SHAKESPEARE has placed this doctrine in the strongest light, and, Garrick, his great interpreter, was, it may be said, equal to his master. Every sentiment rose in his mind, and shewed itself in his countenance, before he

he uttered a word. He closes his soliloquy, as he thinks, not determined to commit the deed, and tells his wife, "*We will proceed "no further in this business.*" She uses all her influence to dissipate his doubts, and draws from him the noblest sentiment that ever entered the human mind.

> I dare do all that may become a man;
> Who dares do more is none.

His ambition is still working in his heart: in a faint tone he utters his only remaining doubt, "*If we should fail?*" That fear is removed by the wickedness of an ambitious woman; and he resolves to execute the deed. But Shakespeare's genius was not yet exhausted. It remained for him to give the picture of a mind going to commit a deed of horror. Conscious of his full design, *Macbeth*, with terror and

and dismay says, "*Is this a dagger that I "see before me?*" Garrick's attitude, his consternation, and his pause, while his soul appeared in his countenance, and the accents that followed, astonished the spectators. The sequel was a climax of terror, till at last he finds it to be the effect of a disordered imagination, and his conscience forces him to say,

> It is the bloody business, which informs
> Thus to my eyes.

If any thing can deter the mind of man from embarking in projects of guilt, the horrors, here represented in such glaring colours, would, upon due reflection, be sufficient to alarm his heart, and call him back to the paths of virtue. But *Macbeth*, incited by his wife, pursues his evil purpose, and executes the murder. When

Garrick re-entered the scene, with the bloody dagger in his hand, he was absolutely scared out of his senses; he looked like a ghastly spectacle, and his complexion grew whiter every moment, till at length, his conscience stung and pierced to the quick, he said in a tone of wild despair,

> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous sea incarnadine,
> Making the *Green*—ONE RED.

It is true, that he was for some time in the habit of saying, the *green-one red*; but upon consideration, he adopted the alteration, which was first proposed by this writer in the Gray's Inn Journal. But his criticism has been, since that time, strongly opposed by some of the commentators, who will have it, that the passage

sage does not imply the *many-waved* ocean, but *the countless masses of water diffused on the surface of the globe*, as if Shakespeare had in his imagination, the Pontic sea, the Propontic, and the Hellespont, the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Baltic, and other seas of whatever denomination. But surely it is evident to the plainest understanding, that great Neptune's ocean, on account of the multitude of waves in constant agitation, is with propriety called the *multitudinous sea*, which is almost a translation of Homer's πολυφλοισβοιο θαλασσης; and then changing the *green colour* of the ocean to one *universal red* is a sublime idea. To prove the contrary, the commentators have a multitudinous sea of ink, but their reasoning does not require any further argument, especially as Dr. Johnson has given his sanction to the new reading.

Testis mearum centimanus Gyas
Sententiarum!

After the murder of his sovereign, *Macbeth* is *in blood stepped in so far*, that he hires assassins to cut off *Banquo*, and, such is the force of an avenging conscience, that in the banquetting-scene, he sees the ghost of *Banquo*, and starts from his seat in wild amazement. It may now be imagined, that the poet could add no more to enforce his great moral doctrine. But *Lady Macbeth* had hitherto triumphed in her guilt; and it was still to be seen how her conscience dealt with her. It is well known, that many, even innocent persons, walk in their sleep. The French writers relate a long account of a man, to whom they have given the name of *Somnambule*. Shakespeare makes his guilty heroine walk in her sleep. Voltaire might censure this, as inconsistent

with

with the dignity of tragedy, or, if he had courage to hazard it on the stage, he would in all probability, have given her a speech of sixty lines, with all the studied graces of harmonious versification. Our great poet copied from nature, and, in short broken sentences, discovers the agitations of a distracted mind. "*Out damned spot!—Who would have* "*thought the old man could have had so* "*much blood in him?—All the perfumes* "*in Arabia will not sweeten this little hand* "*—Oh!*" She heaves a sigh, as if her heart would break, and retires to bed, there to be tortured by thick-coming fancies. It is not in the power of words to do justice to Mrs. Pritchard in this scene; but happily Mrs. Siddons can give an adequate idea of her excellence in the whole character.

THE speech, which *Macbeth* addresses to the physician, is one of the finest in all poetry, and it required a Garrick to deliver it.

> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
> Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
> Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
> And, with some sweet oblivious antidote,
> Cleanse the full bosom of that perilous stuff,
> Which weighs upon the heart?

Macbeth, in a short time, hears of the *Queen's* death: His conscience forces from him several deep moral reflections. He shews on every occasion, that *he lies on the torture of the mind in restless extacy*; but we find no symptoms of contrition; his natural courage supports him under all his afflictions, till, at last, he has reason to curse the fiend, that paltered with him in a double sense. He resolves, however, to die with harness on his back; he

fights

fights with desperate fury, and falls a victim to his crimes.

UPON the whole, the tragedy of *Macbeth* is the greatest moral lesson that ever was presented on the stage. It displays the power of conscience in the strongest light; it shews the fatality that attends wild ambition, and the folly of believing the false predictions of vile impostors, who pretend to have præternatural communications. The Greek, the Roman, and the French theatres, have nothing to compare with it, and Garrick, to use Cibber's expression, "out-did his usual out-doings."

CHAP. VIII.

REGULUS, *a Tragedy, by Mr.* WILLIAM HAVARD—*Some Account of the Author, and his Play, as also of* GARRICK *in the Part of* REGULUS—*The Tragedy of* MAHOMET, *by the Rev.* JAMES MILLER—*It is taken from the* MAHOMET *of* VOLTAIRE—*The great Importance of the Subject—The Moral enforces the Cause of Benevolence and Humanity—Bigotry, Superstition, and Enthusiasm, the Cause of Religious Murder, Massacres, and terrible Effusion of Blood—The Play not well received in France, but in time revived with great Applause—*GARRICK *in the Part of* ZAPHNA.

BEFORE the end of January 1744, that worthy man, who was universally respected for the integrity of his character, and his polished manners, Mr. William Havard, brought forward a tragedy, intitled *Regulus*. This

play was not the production of a novice in the dramatic art. He was, in the year 1733, the author of *Scanderberg*, which met with good success; and in 1737, he brought forward a tragedy, intitled *Charles the First*; a piece replete with just and noble sentiments on the subject of civil liberty, anarchy, and republican factions. His last play was well received by an audience willing to be pleased. The subject is well known to all who are in any degree versed in the Roman history. Regulus was a prisoner at Carthage, when the people, reduced by the events of a disastrous war to the last distress, desired to patch up a peace with Rome. To ensure success to the measure, Regulus was thought the fit person to negotiate on their part. But, before he was suffered to depart, an oath was administered to him in full senate, by which he solemnly bound

bound himself to return, if he did not succeed in his embassy; and notice was given to him, at the same time, that if he once more became their captive, he should suffer the most horrible tortures, and be put to a lingering death, after having his eye-lids cut off, and in that condition exposed to the burning sun. Under those conditions, Regulus proceeded to Rome, not to settle the terms of peace, but, on the contrary, to advise a continuance of the war. This was the man whom Garrick personated; and his admirable execution gave warmth and energy to the whole piece. I will only add, that a gentleman, with whom I enjoyed an intimate acquaintance, often expressed his regret, that the play was laid aside after the eleventh night, as Garrick's performance was a classical representation of that Roman worthy, as he is described by Horace, walking

with

with undaunted firmness through crowds that wished to detain him at Rome; and, though he knew what he was to suffer at Carthage, still proceeding on his way, with the serenity of a man who was going to refresh himself from the fatigues of the bar, at his villa in the country.

Atqui sciebat quæ sibi Barbarus
Tortor parabat, non aliter tamen
Dimovit obstantes amicos,
Et populum reditus morantem,
Quam si clientum longa negotia
Dijudicata lite relinqueret;
Tendens Venafranos in agros,
Aut Lacedæmonium Tarentum.

My friend, who was an excellent critic, was used to say, that Garrick's manner of acting *Regulus*, seemed to him a translation of the above passage.

TOWARDS

TOWARDS the end of March, another new play made its appearance. This was *Mahomet*, a tragedy, by the Reverend James Miller; a tolerably good translation of *Mahomet la Prophete*, by the celebrated Voltaire. The story is great, important, and highly interesting. In France it met with no encouragement in the outset. The bigots and enthusiasts of that country formed a strong party against it; and Voltaire, after the third representation, was obliged to withdraw his piece. He lived, however, to see the violence of religious zeal much abated, and the delusions of bigotry banished out of the world by superior reason. The play was restored to the stage, and much admired. The *Tartuffe* of Moliere met with a similar fate. It was proscribed by the whole race of hypocrites; but a revolution in the sentiments of mankind soon took place, and the play triumphed

umphed over its enemies. The design was to tear off the mask of hypocrisy, and expose that pernicious vice in its true colours: "And "why," says Voltaire, "may not a poet dis- "play that same hypocrisy, inflamed by en- "thusiasm, and with frantic zeal, offering hu- "man victims at the altar of God?" If, by exhibiting such scenes of horror, the tragic muse can give a lesson of humanity, and teach the bigot to sheathe his murderous blade, the stage will do more essential service to society, than even Bourdaloue in his pulpit. The massacres occasioned by bigotry and superstition have deluged the world with blood; and, to encrease the horror of religious wars, young men, seduced by their fanatic teachers, have sought the glory of being assassins in the name of God. Henry III. of France was murdered by Jaque Clement, a young man at the age of twenty-

twenty-five. Ravilliac, who stabbed the great Henry IV. was not much above twenty. A young Spaniard set out from Rome, with a design to assassinate William, Prince of Orange; and, what shews the spirit of persecution in the strongest light, is the observation of Strada, who, in his history "*De Bello Belgico,*" relates the fact, and gravely tells us, in praise of the ruffian, that he did not attempt the deed, till he had received absolution from a Dominican friar, and received the holy sacrament. *Saniora spectasse eo visus est, quod non ante aggredi facinus sustinuit, quam expiatam noxis animam apud Dominicanum sacerdotem cælesti pane confirmaverit.* The same historian tells us, that the assassin, who afterwards gave the prince a mortal wound, gloried in what he had done, and on the rack declared, that he was invited to the deed by the spirit of God.

God. *Divino instinatu id a se patratum.* The English *Maltomet* says after Voltaire,

> Youth is the stock, whence grafted superstition
> Shoots with unbounded vigour, ever ready
> With pious rage to martyr half mankind.

Upon this principle, *Mahomet* fixes on *Zaphna*, a youth whom he had trained up in his impious doctrine, and thinks him the fittest instrument for his purpose. He employs him, accordingly, to murder *Alcanor*, knowing him to be *Zaphna's* father, but concealing that secret from the young man. The grand impostor was considered as a delegate from heaven, and nothing less than a god on earth. The Mussulmen were taught to believe, that he was taken up to heaven by the angel Gabriel; and that, after a number of conferences with the Supreme Being, he brought with him

the Alcoran, to be communicated to his prosolytes. His influence over the mind of *Zaphna* was, of course, irresistible. The young man enters the temple with *Palmira*, whom he does not know to be his sister. *Alcanor* is at the altar, offering up his prayers. *Zaphna* listens, and cries out, "*Hear how the wretch blasphemes!*" In a fit of frantic zeal, he rushes on the old man, who had retired behind the altar, and executes the barbarous deed. *Palmira*, in the interval, trembles with expectation. *Zaphna* returns, and *Alcanor* follows him with the dagger in his body, and informs them both that he is their father. A scene of grief and lamentation follows; but, strong as the situation is, it cannot be said that our passions are wrought to as high a pitch as might be expected. Voltaire, it is evident, had the tragedy of *Macbeth* in his eye; but if

he

he had applied himself more closely to the scenes before and after the murder, he would have learned from that great master of the human heart, to give more fire and animation to the close of his fourth act. Why *Alcanor* does not expire on the spot, no reason can be given: he is led off, and in the fifth act, we are told that he is dead. *Zaphna* is poisoned by order of *Mahomet*, and dies in his presence. The Impostor is in love with *Palmira*; for without love there can be no French play: he offers his addresses to her; but she pours her curses on him, and dies by her own hand. In the part of *Zaphna*, Garrick represented a lad of eighteen, and was the chief support of the piece. The author died on his benefit night, and his widow received the profits. The play, though well received, had no great run; but it was revived at Drury-Lane, in 1765, and

often repeated with great applause. The subject is of much importance to society, and, on account of its moral doctrine, ought to hold an established rank on every stage in his Majesty's dominions.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

GARRICK *in the Character of Sir* JOHN BRUTE—CIBBER'S *Tragedy of* PAPAL TYRANNY *in the Reign of* KING JOHN, *acted at Covent-Garden*—GARRICK *revives* SHAKESPEARE'S KING JOHN *in Opposition to Old* CIBBER—THOMSON'S *Tragedy of* TANCRED *and* SIGISMUNDA—GARRICK *in* TANCRED, *and Mrs.* CIBBER *in* SIGISMUNDA—GARRICK *in the Character of* OTHELLO.

September 1744, to June 1745.

GARRICK was now in possession of the four greatest characters in the compass of the drama; for such are *Lear, Richard, Hamlet,* and *Macbeth.* For the sake of amusing himself as well as the public, with occasional variety, he intermixed a number of modern tragedies.

He was, in like manner, eager to enlarge his stock of comedies; and, with that view, he gratified the audience with the sullen humour of *Sir John Brute*. He was, in fact, another Proteus, in the celerity with which he transformed himself into different shapes. The moment he entered, *Sir John* was seen in his face, his gait, and his whole deportment. His voice, which was naturally clear and agreeable to the ear, was changed to a rough and sullen tone. As he continued to play the part late in life, numbers are still alive, who bear in memory the great comic powers which he displayed in every situation throughout the play. A minute description of him were superfluous. It will be sufficient to say, that Colley Cibber, and he only, expressed the strongest disapprobation.

CIBBER, however, soon after this, gave Garrick a fair opportunity to revenge himself. It was known that Cibber was preparing to bring forward his tragedy, called *Papal Tyranny in the Reign of King John.* This is the play, of which Pope said in the *Dunciad,* "*King John in silence modestly expires.*" But Pope was no more; and Cibber was emboldened to produce his play at Covent-Garden theatre. Garrick, ever jealous for the honour of Shakespeare, and glad of the opportunity to counteract his enemy, contrived to have *King John* put into rehearsal at Drury-Lane. The fable of that play is conducted in Shakespeare's wildest manner; the scene lies sometimes in England, sometimes in France, without due preparation to make it clear to which country the poet has conveyed us. And yet in all this confusion, Shakespeare's genius

triumphed over all inconsistencies, and Garrick's ambition was amply gratified. Cibber acted *Pandulph*, the Pope's legate, but he was at that time a superanuated performer. His voice, which never qualified him for tragedy, was much impaired, and his articulation was too feeble; but his deportment was said to be remarkably graceful. Curiosity was excited, and numbers flocked to the house to see a veteran performer. His tragedy did not add the smallest sprig of laurel to his brow. If he had left the play as a posthumous piece to his executors, he would have shewn his judgement.

> Poets lose half the praise they would have got,
> Were it but known what they discreetly blot.

After the run of *King John*, Thomson, the admired author of the *Seasons*, brought for-

forward, in the month of February 1745, his tragedy of *Tancred and Sigismunda*. It is the best of that poet's dramatic works, in my opinion, superior to *Agamemnon*, notwithstanding the encomiums bestowed on it by the late Dr. Joseph Wharton. In the closet, *Tancred and Sigismunda* is a most delightful composition; but it must be acknowledged, that stage-effect was not Thomson's talent. There are no incidents that seem to retard, and yet hurry on the main action. The rules for gardening, which Pope has given in his *Epistle to Lord Burlington*, may be transferred to dramatic poetry:

> He gains all points, who pleasingly confounds,
> Surprizes, varies, and conceals the bounds.

And again,

> No pleasing intricacies intervene,
> No artful wildness to perplex the scene;

Grove nods at grove; each alley has a brother,
And half the platform just reflects the other.

This is too much the case in the play before us. The dialogue runs generally into long speeches, all in fine versification, but more florid than natural. The loves of *Tancred and Sigismunda* are exquisitely tender, but too poetical in the expression. Their speeches are often thirty or forty lines, alternately imposing on each other the task of listening in a mute attitude, much longer than consists with the ardour of mutual passion. And yet such was the charm of graceful elocution, that the audience, as Milton expresses it, had ears to rapture. Garrick was, as *Sigismunda* describes him,

——— All warmth, all amiable fire,
All quick heroic ardour! temper'd soft
With gentleness of heart, and manly reason.

Mrs.

Mrs. Cibber was harmony itself. With two such performers, no wonder that the play met with great success; and was some years afterwards revived with the highest applause.

THIS play was soon followed by the tragedy of *Othello*. Garrick's benefit was announced in the month of March: for that night he was prepared to act the *Moor of Venice*. He was aware that his stature was inferior to that of his predecessors, and, to assist his figure, he chose to appear in a Venetian dress. Quin went to see his performance; and Dr. Hoadley, who accompanied him, used to tell, that as soon as Garrick entered, Quin said, in his morose manner, "Why does not he bring "the tea-kettle and lamp?" Dr. Hoadley added, that Quin saw, though he was not candid enough to acknowledge it, a performer, who

who had the passions at his command, and was in the sudden violence of their transitions without a rival. As Garrick did not, at a more advanced period retain the part, this writer is not able to offer any criticisms on the subject. He thinks proper, however, to observe, that *Othello* could not be a well-chosen part for a man, who performed wonders with that expressive face. The black complexion disguised his features, and the expression of the mind was wholly lost.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

GARRICK *in September* 1745 *goes to Dublin—Acts there during the Season, in Conjunction with* SHERIDAN—*The Rebellion in Scotland*—Lord CHESTERFIELD, *Lord Lieutenant of Ireland*—GARRICK *and* SHERIDAN *meet with great Applause*—BARRY, *the famous Actor, made his First Appearance in* OTHELLO—GARRICK *was one of his Warm Admirers, and, on his Return to England, made a Fair Report of him*—GARRICK *acts Six Nights in the Summer at Covent-Garden Theatre.*

September 1745, to June 1746.

GARRICK passed this entire season in Dublin. He was invited by Mr. Sheridan, the father of the present eminent genius of that name. The

The proposal was to be joint manager for the season. A rebellion had broke out in Scotland, and Lord Chesterfield, that illustrious and most accomplished wit, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. That was in Garrick's opinion an alluring circumstance, and, accordingly, he withdrew from the London stage. Drury-Lane was under the management of Mr. Lacy, who found himself greatly distressed during the whole winter. Sheridan and Garrick went on in the most amicable manner. They appeared alternately in their principal characters, and acted together in such tragedies, as afforded to each an adequate part. Very few anecdotes worth recording have reached this writer. He remembers to have heard Garrick repeat a song, which he wrote to be sung before *Sir John Brute* and his tavern friends. The first stanza, manifestly

nifestly calculated for the meridian of Dublin, is all that he recollects.

'Tis in claret alone I place all my hope;
There's more absolution in that than the Pope;
That famous Elixir Salutis of Life,
With which you may face either devil or wife.

GARRICK was fond of repeating an Epigram, which was made during his stay in Dublin, and owed its birth to the following circumstance: King William's birth-day is always celebrated with great pomp at the Castle of Dublin, and the ladies adorn their persons with orange-coloured ribbons. On that occasion, the Widow Madden, a lady of great beauty, and known to be a Roman Catholic, was at Court dressed in the fashionable stile. Mr. Arthur St. Leger, a young man of promising genius, who went soon after into the army, and was

was killed at the battle of Fontenoy, happened to be in the circle, and observing the fair widow, and the ornaments of her person, withdrew, from his place, and wrote the following lines:

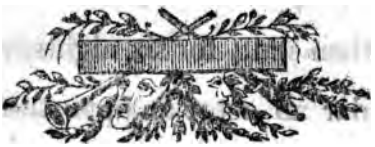
Little Tory, where's the jest,
To wear that Orange on your breast?
When that same breast betraying, shews
The whiteness of the *Rebel Rose.*

In the course of the play-house season, a great theatrical phænomenon made its appearance. This was the celebrated Barry, who soon after blazed out on the London stage, and gave delight to the metropolis. His first attempt was in the character of *Othello,* if that may be called an attempt, which was almost perfection at the outset. He was received with universal applause. Garrick was among the foremost of his admirers, and, when he returned from

from his Irish expedition in May 1746, he spoke in the most generous terms of Barry's merit, and was upon all occasions loud in his praise.

RICH was by this time convinced that Garrick was an extraordinary Actor. He wished to gain an accession of strength for the ensuing season, and, accordingly, made overtures to the man whom he had rejected with disdain. He offered advantageous terms, and as a further inducement, proposed to open his play-house, which was then shut, for six nights, in order to give so popular an actor an opportunity of appearing before a London audience, upon an equal share of the profits. Garrick embraced the offer, and played his capital parts with great success. Lacy, in the mean time, left no stone unturned, to draw Garrick for the ensuing

suing winter to Drury-Lane. But his applications were too late; Rich had carried his point, determined to open his theatre at the usual time with a strong company.



CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

RICH *engages* GARRICK *for the ensuing Season—A Strong Company of Performers at that Theatre*; QUIN, Mrs. CIBBER, Mrs. PRITCHARD, WOODWARD, &c.—BARRY *engaged by* LACY *at Drury Lane.—A further Account of* BARRY, *and his Extraordinary Powers*—GARRICK *and* QUIN *carry all before them*—GARRICK'S *Farce of* MISS IN HER TEENS—Dr. HOADLEY *brings out his Comedy of the* SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND—FOOTE'S *Criticism, and Approbation of the Play*—GARRICK *in* RANGER, *and* Mrs. PRITCHARD *in* CLARINDA—GARRICK'S *excellent Epilogue—Anecdote of* QUIN *and* GARRICK.

September 1746, to June 1747. THIS was the most flourishing season that was ever known at Covent-Garden. Quin, Garrick, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Woodward, Ryan, Chapman, and others of considerable, but in-

ferior merit, formed a stronger set of performers than had been seen since the time of Booth, Wilks, and Cibber. Mr. Lacy in the preceding summer was greatly alarmed at so formidable a junction, and, in order, if possible, to make head against it, he went to Dublin, and saw Barry, who was the idol of the people. He offered him handsome terms, and engaged him to act at Drury-Lane. Barry had very great requisities for the profession, in which he had recently embarked: he was a fine figure, full six feet high, well made, his whole frame in just symmetry and proportion, graceful in his movements, and certainly one of the handsomest men in Europe. He was sensibly alive to all the passions, and acted from the impulse of his feelings; his heart was his prompter, and under that guide, he was sure to imitate nature. He was allowed to be

the most accomplished lover on the stage. *Castalio*, in the *Orphan*, and *Varanes*, in the tragedy of *Theodosius*, drew from him notes of the most exquisite pathetic. In *Othello*, he was master of the quick vicissitudes of love, of grief, of rage, and tenderness, and in the conflict, or, as Shakespeare has it, in the tempest and whirlwind of the passions, his voice was harmony in an uproar. And yet, with all those powers, he was not able to cope with the combined forces of Covent Garden. Quin and Garrick carried on their business in perfect good humour with each other. Each in his turn played his favourite characters; but, it was universally agreed, that Quin gained no addition to his fame, by appearing in *Lear*, *Richard*, and *Macbeth*. They acted frequently in the same play: In *Jane Shore*, Quin was *Glocester*; Garrick, *Lord Hastings*; in the

Orphan, Quin was *Sciolto*, Garrick, *Chamont*; in the first part of *Henry IV.* Garrick played *Hotspur*, in order to give new attraction to Quin's *Sir John Falstaff*. The *Fair Penitent* was their strong play; Quin performed the part of *Horatio*, with that emphasis and dignity, which his elocution gave to moral sentiments. Garrick, in *Lothario*, was the gay young man of intrigue, and with that spirit, which, in fashionable language, is called a sense of honour, he well might say,

> And love and war take turns like day and night,
> Ready for both, and arm'd for either field.

The public was delighted to see the contest between two such rivals, and, accordingly, the *Fair Penitent* was their Saturday-night play against the Opera.

GARRICK had already tried his genius as a dramatic writer, in the farces of *Lethe* and the *Lying Valet*, both to this day in high estimation. Early in January 1747, he produced *Miss in her Teens*; a piece at that time greatly admired, and to this day worthy of more notice than it meets with from those, whose province it is to cater for the public taste. The severest critic must allow that the fable is well imagined; the incidents spring out of one another in a well connected series, with frequent turns of surprise, but never violating the rules of probability. *Captain Flash* and *Fribble* are not the mere offspring of the poet's imagination, they were copied from life. The coffee-houses were infested by a set of young officers, who entered with a martial air, fierce *Kavenhuller* hats, and long swords. They paraded the room with ferocity, ready to

draw without provocation. In direct contrast to this race of braggarts, stood the pretty gentlemen, who chose to unsex themselves, and make a display of delicacy that exceeded female softness. To expose these two opposite characters to contempt and ridicule was the design of *Miss in her Teens*, and this was effectually done by *Woodward*, in *Captain Flash*, and Garrick in the mincing character of *Fribble*. The ferocious, swaggering *Bravo* did not chuse to be called *Captain Flash*, and, the delicate beau was frightened out of his little wits by the name of *Fribble*. They were both laughed out of society.

To this piece succeeded in the month of February 1747, the *Suspicious Husband*, a comedy by Dr. Hoadley. This was the first good comedy from the time of the *Provoked Husband* in

1727;

1727; a long and dreary interval, which unfortunately seems to be renewed by an eclipse of all genius since Mr. Sheridan's *School for Scandal* in May 1777. The *Suspicious Husband* met with great success; but the small wits nibbled at it in epigrams, paragraphs, and pamphlets, till a critic of superior class drew his pen in answer to all malicious cavils. This was the famous Samuel Foote. His criticism, which had for its title, "*The Roman and* "*English Comedy compared,*" is now on the table before me. An extract from it will supersede the necessity of any further remarks on the subject. Foote says, "Most of the "characters are real; the incidents are inter-"esting; the catastrophe pleasing; and the "language pure, spirited, and natural. *Strick-*" *land,* who gives a name to the play, is well

" drawn, and ably supported to the end.
" Among the scenes, in which the author de-
" signed to ridicule the absurdity of suspicion,
" is that, where *Mr. Strickland* is desirous,
" and yet afraid, of engaging his domestics in
" the service of his passion. He is on the
" point of trusting *Tester*, but recoils, and
" calls for *Lucetta*; but, in her turn he doubts
" her honesty. His perplexity, his resolu-
" tions, and hesitations, make up so natural
" and so comic a description of that disease
" of the mind, that the play, were there no
" other reason, deserves the highest commen-
" dation.

" *Mrs. Strickland's* innocence, joined to
" her other amiable qualities, interests the au-
" dience in her favour.

" THE

" THE two fine gentlemen, *Frankly* and " *Bellamy*, differ little from the fine gentle- " men of other writers; they laugh, sing, say " good things, and are in love.

" THE rake is a lively portrait of that cha- " racter in life: his errors arise from the want " of reflection. A lively imagination with a " great flow of spirits, hurries him into all the " follies of the town, but there is not the " least shadow of wickedness or dishonour in " any of his actions; he avoids both with " the same care that he would a precipice. " His natural good qualities obtain for him on " the stage the same indulgence that attends " him in the world. We are blind to his " foibles, entertained by his adventures, and " wish to see the rogue reclaimed.

" THE

" THE importation of fopperies from France
" we have laughed at till we are tired. Our
" author was willing to try whether *Italy*
" could not furnish a fool as ridiculous and
" diverting as our neighbours. But no sooner
" has *Jack Meggot* raised our attention, but
" he slips through our fingers like an eel, and
" we hear no more of him till the last scene.
" He does, in truth, survive the loss of his
" monkey, but is never tolerable company
" after."

THUS far the ingenious Mr. Foote. It may be added, that the incidents in the third act, the ladder of ropes prepared for *Jacintha's* escape, the use that *Ranger* makes of it, his hat by accident left in *Mrs, Strickland's* room, are circumstances that give vivacity to the action. The fourth act is kept in agitation

by

by the mistakes of *Bellamy* and *Frankly*, and *Ranger's* accidental interview with his cousin *Clarinda* is an artful and well-imagined preparation for the final event, which is brought about by the good offices of *Ranger*, who may be said to be, in some degree, reclaimed from his errors, by the moral with which he concludes the play.

> Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
> When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair,
> And kind compliance proves their mutual care.

The play had a considerable run. The public were glad to see the revival of true comedy, after a long gothic night, without one star of genius left in the hemisphere. *Clarinda* was performed by Mrs. Pritchard with that spirit, grace, and elegance, which distinguished all her fine ladies. *Ranger*, as Garrick presented him,

him, was the most sprightly, gay, frolicksome, young rake that had ever been seen on the stage. The Prologue and Epilogue were from the pen of Garrick. The last was new in the kind, and so full of humour, that the reader, we believe, will be pleased to see it in this place.

EPILOGUE.

SPOKEN BY MRS. PRITCHARD.

THOUGH the young smarts, I see, begin to sneer,
And the old sinners cast a wicked leer,
Be not alarm'd, ye fair; you've nought to fear.
No wanton hints, no loose ambiguous sense,
Shall flatter vicious taste at your expence;
Leaving for once those shameless arts in vogue,
We give a fable for an epilogue.

An ass there was, our author bids me say,
Who needs must write; he did, and wrote a play.

The

The parts were cast to various beasts and fowl;
The stage a barn, the manager an owl.
The house was cramm'd at six, with friends and foes,
Rakes, wits, and critics, citizens, and beaux.
Those characters appear'd in various shapes
Of tygers, foxes, horses, bulls, and apes;
With others too of lower rank and station;
A perfect abstract of the brute creation!
Each, as he felt, mark'd out the author's faults,
And thus the connoisseurs express'd their thoughts.

The critic curs first snarl'd, the rules are broke,
Time, place, and action, sacrific'd to joke.
The goats cried out, 'tis formal, dull, and chaste,
Not writ for beasts of gallantry and taste.

The horned cattle were in piteous taking,
At fornication, rapes, and cuckold-making!
The tygers swore, he wanted fire and passion,
The apes condemn'd, because it was the fashion.

The

The gen'rous steeds allow'd him proper merit;
Here mark'd his faults, and there approv'd his spirit;
While brother-bards bray'd forth with usual spleen,
And, as they heard, exploded ev'ry scene.

When reynard's thoughts were ask'd, the shrugging sage,
Fam'd for hypocrisy, and worn with age,
Condemn'd the shameless licence of the stage.
At which the monkey skipp'd from box to box,
And whisper'd round the judgement of the fox;
Abus'd the moderns, talk'd of Rome and Greece,
Bilk'd ev'ry box-keeper, and damn'd the piece.

Now ev'ry fable has a moral to it:
Be churchman, statesman, any thing but poet.
In law or physic, quack in what you will,
Cant and grimace conceal the want of skill;
Secure in these his gravity may pass,
But here no artifice can hide the ass.

AN anecdote of old Rich on this occasion has been often told. He sat in the orchestra on the first night, and when Mrs. Pritchard spoke the words, "*the manager an owl,*" he turned to a friend, and whispered, "*He "means me.*"

THE theatre closed at the usual time, after a full tide of success. During the whole season, Quin and Garrick had no kind of difference. The latter allowed his rival great merit in his proper walk, and always spoke of *Falstaff* as the perfection of acting. He admired Quin's vein of humour, and was often in the habit of repeating his jokes, however rough and sarcastic. The following story, told with vivacity and comic humour, has often set the table on a roar. Quin engaged a convivial party to sup at the Crown and Anchor; Garrick was one

of

of the number. At a late hour the company made their escape from more wine. Quin had some business to settle with Garrick, and detained him above half an hour. When they were ready to go, a shower of rain came down in such a tempestuous manner, that they could not think of stirring. There was no hackney-coach on the stand. Two chairs were ordered. The waiter in a short time reported, that only one could be found. Garrick proposed that Quin should go first, and he would wait till the chair returned. "Poh! that is standing "upon ceremony," said Quin; "We can go "together."—"Together! that is impossible." "Impossible! nothing more easy," replied Quin; "I will go in the chair, and you can "go in the lantern."

Both play-houses being shut at the usual time, Rich was desirous of an engagement with Garrick for another year; but a change in the theatrical hemisphere made that scheme impracticable. Green and Amber, bankers in the Strand, who had purchased of Fleetwood, were reduced to the necessity of stopping payment. The patent, by an established custom, was at that time a grant from the crown for twenty-one years, and had no more than three or four to run. Lacy saw his opportunity, and, to secure a more permanent interest, obtained a promise from the Duke of Grafton, then Lord Chamberlain, that, if he purchased, he should have in due time a renewal of the patent. To this Mr. Pelham annexed a condition, that Lacy should pay into the Treasury a sum, not very great, which was due from Green and Amber. These preliminaries being settled,

Lacy, in order to ensure success to his undertaking, invited Garrick to enter into the scheme, and be upon equal shares joint patentee. This was a tempting bait. Garrick jumped at it. The idea of being manager, and having in his own hands the direction of all theatrical entertainments, fired his imagination. He did not hesitate long. His friends encouraged him to proceed, and with their assistance, he advanced *eight thousand pounds*, and mounted the throne, to which he had long aspired.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

GARRICK *Patentee of Drury-Lane, in Partnership with* Mr. LACY—Mrs. CIBBER, Mrs. PRITCHARD, WOODWARD, HAVARD, *and some others go over to Drury-Lane*—BARRY *continues to act at that Theatre*—GARRICK *opens the Season with a Prologue by* Dr. JOHNSON—*He resolves to restore Nature and* SHAKESPEARE *to the Stage*—*He revives* VENICE PRESERVED—*Plays* JAFFIER; *and* BARRY, PIERRE—*Analysis of the Play*—*The Character of* JAFFIER *examined, and delineated*—Mrs. CIBBER *in* BELVIDERA.

September 1747, to June 1748.

WE enter now upon a new æra in the history of the English stage; the greatest and most splendid that the drama of this country has ever known. A glorious scene begins to open, and I say with pleasure,

——— Major rerum mihi nascitur ordo;
Majus opus moveo.

THE two managers opened the season with a strong company. Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Woodward, Havard, and others of useful talents, followed Garrick's banners, and engaged themselves at Drury Lane. Barry was under articles with Lacy, and continued to flourish at that theatre. It was opened on the 20th September 1747. Garrick spoke a Prologue on the occasion, written by his friend, Samuel Johnson, in a stile, if we except Pope's to the tragedy of *Cato*, superior to every thing of the kind in the English language. The insertion of it in this place, will, we imagine, be acceptable to the reader.

PROLOGUE.

WHEN learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose.
Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
Exhausted worlds, and then imagin'd new.

Existence

Existence saw him spurn her bounded reign,
And panting time toil'd after him in vain.
His pow'rful strokes presiding truth impress'd,
And unresisted passion storm'd the breast.

Then Jonson came, instructed from the school,
To please by method, and invent by rule;
His studious patience, and laborious art,
By regular approach assail'd the heart.
Cold approbation gave the ling'ring bayes,
For those who durst not censure, scarce could praise.
A mortal born, he met the gen'ral doom,
But left, like Egypt's Kings, a lasting tomb.

The wits of Charles found easier ways to fame,
Nor wish'd for Jonson's art or Shakespeare's flame.
Themselves they studied; as they felt they writ;
Intrigue was plot; obscenity was wit.
Vice always found a sympathetic friend;
They pleas'd their age, and did not hope to mend.
Yet bards like these aspir'd to lasting praise,
And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days.

In this elegant address Garrick introduced himself to the public in the office of manager. The sentiments so forcibly expressed, were what he had formed in his mind, what he embraced, and cherished. To revive dramatic poetry in all its lustre was his ardent wish. He considered tragedy as the school of virtue, representing the actions, passions, and sufferings, of human nature, for the instruction of mankind; and true comedy as the mirror of life, in which may be seen the follies, humours, and foibles, of the mind, exposed to ridicule; at once to delight and to reform the manners of the age. By cultivating these two branches of the drama, he hoped to banish pantomime, rope-dancing, and the Smithfield muses. He said with Rowe,

> Must Shakespeare, Fletcher, and laborious Ben,
> Be left for Scaramouch and Harlequin?

Instead

Instead of those monsters, he brought forward, early in the month of January 1748, Otway's tragedy of *Venice Preserved*. He had studied the character of *Jaffier* in the preceding season, with intent to perform it, with the advantage of having Quin in the part of *Pierre*; but a fever, that lasted three or four weeks, obliged him to postpone that design. He now prevailed on Barry to undertake the part, and, with that great coadjutor, he presented *Jaffier* to the public. The critics have objected to this play, that the title of *Venice Preserved, or a Plot discovered*, is by no means proper, as, instead of keeping the audience in a state of suspence, it announces the catastrophe. This undoubtedly is an error *in limine*; and in the body of the work, we have a gross violation of all decorum, in the low buffoonery of *Antonio* with *Aquilina*. The scene,

scene, were it written with true comic humour, would be still exceptionable, as it is detached from the context of the fable, and is merely episodical. It is judiciously omitted in the representation, and the play as acted, is perhaps the best since the days of Shakespeare. "*Pierre* is painted in the most striking colours; his zeal for liberty and abhorrence of oppression, would be real virtues, had they not been converted, by the violent temper of the man, into the most furious passions. Mr. Addison says, "Had the hero discovered the same "good qualities in the defence of his country, "that he shewed for its ruin and subversion, "the audience could not enough pity and ad-"mire him; but as he is now represented, we "can only say of him, what the Roman histo-"rian says of Catiline, that his fall would have "been glorious, (*si pro patria sic concidis-*

"*set,*)

(" *set,*) had he so fallen in the service of his " country."

Jaffier is a very different character, perhaps the fittest for the stage in the whole circle of the drama. His frame of mind is composed of moral qualities, and the most amiable dispositions; the mild affections, public as well as private, are planted in his nature; love and friendship are his ruling passions; he doats on *Belvidera*, and is sincerely attached to *Pierre*; he feels for the public good, and has a high sense of honour. But these affections are not upon an even balance; they take their turn, and his virtues counteract one another. The consequence is, that, by his own conduct, he brings on himself the highest misery. This is the mixed imperfect character, which Aristotle, with good reason, prefers to all others, and particularly

to

to those of perfect virtue, as the former comes more home to the feelings of the spectators, and is therefore more sure to excite compassion, and answer the true end of tragedy. Such is the character of *Jaffier*, a man of the best dispositions, but mixed with weakness. He has several virtues, but, acting separately, they lead him into error; as the antagonist muscles of the body, when they do not perform their office in conjunction, draw different ways, and occasion distortion. *Jaffier* is treated with inhumanity by *Priuli*, his father-in-law, but still he is in love with *Belvidera*, and pleased in ruin. To this succeeds his friendship and warm attachment to *Pierre*. That bold conspirator knows the avenues to the heart of his friend. He tells him that he passed by his doors, and found them guarded by a troop of ruffians, who were seizing all his effects and the very

very bed that first received him to *Belvidera's* arms. He describes her coming forth in tears, and the mob grumbling pity. He urges every topic that can inflame the passions of his friend, and draws him into the conspiracy. *Jaffier's* love is still working in his heart; he will revenge his *Belvidera's* tears, and *Priuli* must fall a victim. He agrees to join the conspirators, and his love is so weakened, that he gives up *Belvidera* as a hostage for his conduct. He is, however, soon informed by his wife, that *Renault*, in the dead of night, made an attack upon her virtue. Fired with indignation, he goes to the council of the conspirators; he there hears *Renault* proposing a general massacre; his love is now uppermost, and he takes an opportunity to withdraw from the assembly. *Belvidera* meets him, and her influence is not to be resisted. *Jaffier* hesitates: he

he asks her, must he betray truth, virtue, and his friend? But love is strongest: to that affection all other motives give way, and he consents to make a discovery of the plot in full senate. He enters with *Belvidera*, and delivers a list of his associates. *Pierre* is brought in a prisoner, and, though in a wrong cause, behaves with the greatest fortitude, and spurns from him the man that betrayed him. *Jaffier* is conscious of his treachery; a sense of honour takes possession of him, and his love, which subdued his friendship, is for a time extinguished. He calls *Belvidera* the cause of his perfidy; her tears and false persuading love made him a traitor to his friend, and he resolves that she shall fall a sacrifice. He is on the point of killing her, but his affection once more revives, and from his unnerved arm he drops his poniard. Even in that moment,

friendship

friendship mingles with his conflicting passions; he charges *Belvidera* to fly to her father, and save his friend, or all future quiet is lost for ever. To the last, he does not forget his love of *Belvidera*; he addresses her in the most pathetic terms. The bell tolls for the execution, and strikes terror through the audience. He takes the last farewel of his wife, and hastens to his friend; to save him from the rack, he gives *Pierre* the death-blow, and then dispatches himself. *Belvidera* loses her senses, and dies in that wretched condition. In this manner, *Jaffier*, struggling with alternate virtues, and never firm and constant in any one of them, is the author of his own misery. Such is the character, in which Garrick called forth all his powers. The various passions, expressed by Otway with the greatest energy, were perfectly suited to the genius of

Garrick.

Garrick. He was supported by the enchanting melody of Mrs. Cibber. Barry, it must be acknowledged, did not shine in the part of *Pierre*. The character was not suited to him: his voice was too soft and tender for that rough hero. He felt himself fitter for *Jaffier*; and, during the run of the play, kept his eye on Garrick, resolved, with all the ideas he could glean from that great master, to enter the lists with him at a future day. This he did on Covent-Garden stage, with such harmonious notes, that he was allowed to rival Garrick, and, in some passages, to surpass him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The FOUNDLING, *a Comedy, by* EDWARD MOORE—*Criticism on the Play—The Farce of* LETHE *revived, and meets with Opposition—*GARRICK'S *Alteration of* ROMEO *and* JULIET—*The Catastrophe first altered by* OTWAY, *and greatly improved by* GARRICK—ROMEO *given to* BARRY, *who acquits himself with great Applause—Mrs.* CIBBER *charms every Ear in the Part of* JULIET—*The Play of* MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING—GARRICK *in* BENEDICK, *and Mrs.* PRITCHARD *in* BEATRICE.

AFTER the run of *Venice Preserved*, the first new piece was the comedy of the *Foundling*, by Edward Moore, the elegant author of *Fables for the Female Sex*. The situation of *Fidelia* fixes our attention, and her amiable qualities interest us in her favour. A

cloud hangs over her real condition, and in the mean time, she appears to be a helpless *Foundling*. New perplexities arise in the progress of the fable, and all is involved in mystery, till, towards the end of the piece, her true history is brought to light by unexpected but probable means. Being acknowledged by her father, *Sir Charles Raymond*, she is married to young *Belmont*, who, with the spirit of a young rake, had formed a dishonourable scheme to ruin her virtue. The character of *Rosetta*, who is in love with *Colonel Raymond*, but chuses to coquette with a man of his jealous temper, is lively, gay, and entertaining. The dialogue in the two first acts, is carried on with wit, humour, and great vivacity. The three last acts are of a serious cast, without any intermixture of pleasantry. It is to be regretted, that Mr. Moore did not make a better use

of

of the character of *Faddle*. It is generally understood that his satire was pointed at one Russel, who, by a number of mean actions and petty artifices, had brought disgrace on his name. Mr. Moore copied too closely from the life. *Faddle*, as represented, is a low contemptible wretch: he takes a purse from young *Belmont*, and, for that bribe, engages in a dark design against *Fidelia*; and besides this, he appears willing to receive a kicking, without a spark of courage to protect his person. This might be true of Russel, but on the stage it was a degree of meanness that disgusted the audience, and drew from them strong marks of disapprobation. If the author had given more importance to *Faddle*, instead of sinking him down to the lowest meanness, he might have employed him occasionally to the catastrophe, and, by sallies of

wit, have made the dialogue more lively and entertaining. The play has some resemblance to the *Conscious Lovers*, and by some critics has been pronounced superior to that excellent comedy. We cannot, however, subscribe to that opinion. Sir Richard Steel's play abounds with moral doctrine, tending, in a beautiful stile, to correct and polish the manners; the scene between *Bevil, junior* and *Myrtle* is a most admirable lesson against the tyrant custom of duelling; and the manner in which *Sealand*, by the unexpected, but probable means of a bracelet, discovers *Indiana* to be his daughter, is a most beautiful and pathetic incident. The *Foundling* deserves a rank in the list of good comedies: it is a just and true imitation of life, and bids fair to be revived, whenever the public shall recover their taste for nature and simplicity. The prologue was written

written by Mr. Brooke, the celebrated author of *Gustavus Vasa*, a tragedy prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain, as it seems, without any solid reason. The Epilogue * was from the pen of Garrick, in his usual lively vein.

September 1748, to June 1749.

EARLY in this season, the farce of *Lethe* was revived. Garrick played three different parts, a poet, a drunken man, and a Frenchman; Woodward was the fine gentleman, and Mrs. Clive, the fashionable lady. Notwithstanding these advantages, it met with violent opposition from the minor critics, with whom it was a settled rule to damn every piece they could. Garrick had in readiness for the stage two plays of his favourite Shakespeare. *Romeo and Juliet*

* See the Appendix, No. V.

had been much disfigured in several alterations, and was, therefore, for a long time banished from the stage. Garrick saw that the catastrophe might be made more affecting than it was in the original play, which he knew was founded on an Italian novel, written by Bandello. Two translations of that piece, both essentially different, had been published in Shakespeare's time. The first related the final event in a very imperfect manner. It stated that *Romeo* opened *Juliet's* tomb, and, thinking that she lay there stretched in death, swallowed a dose of poison, which was such *soon speeding geer*, that he expired immediately. *Juliet* in that moment wakes from her trance, and finding her lover dead, in her vehemence of grief, she gives herself a mortal stab, and dies on the spot. The second translation stated the fact with additional circumstances. According

cording to that account, *Juliet* comes to herself in the very moment after *Romeo* had taken the fatal draught. The lover, in his emotions of surprise, forgets what he had done. He is transported with joy, and both break out in a strain of rapture. The poison, however, begins to operate, and the scene of bliss is changed to grief and anguish. *Romeo* expires at her feet, and she, in wild despair, stabs herself, and dies upon the body of the deceased. This improved translation, there is reason to believe, was never seen by Shakespeare. That great poet, we may be sure, would have known how to make the best use of those extraordinary circumstances. We should have had our passions wound up to the highest pitch; the rapture of the lovers would have thrilled through every heart, and the sudden transition to the extreme of misery, would have been a most

pathetic contrast. So fine an opportunity did not escape the notice of Otway, but the use he made of it is very extraordinary. Having designed a tragedy on the civil dissensions at Rome, he transplanted the principal scenes of *Romeo and Juliet* into his *History of the Fall of Caius Marius*, where they are a most unnatural mixture. The great wonder is, that such a writer as Otway, who knew how to touch the tenderest strings of the heart, should have forgot his power over the passions in a catastrophe so exquisitely tender. Garrick, beyond all question, has shewn superior skill. He rouzes a variety of passions; we are transported with joy, surprise, and rapture, and, by a rapid change, we are suddenly overwhelmed with despair, and grief, and pity. Every word pierces to the heart, and the catastrophe, as it

now

now stands, is the most affecting in the whole compass of the drama.

HAVING with great care prepared this play for the stage, he behaved to Barry in the most liberal manner. He knew, that in the lover's parts, he was a great favourite; and, to give him a fair opportunity, assigned to him the part of *Romeo*, with Mrs. Cibber to second him in the character of *Juliet*. Solicitous for the success of his alterations, he attended the rehearsals, and communicated all his ideas to the performers. The consequence was, that Barry and Mrs. Cibber enchanted the public ear for a number of nights. Woodward also gave great satisfaction in the part of *Mercutio*.

DURING the run of this play, Garrick played alternately with it the character of *Benedick* in

in the comedy of *Much ado about Nothing*. The subject is taken from an Italian novel, as was frequently the case, and the plot is crowded with a long list of Dramatis Personæ, and a great deal of episodical business, which by a multiplicity of incidents destroys the unity of action. But *Beatrice* and *Benedick* atone for all defects. Their characters are happily imagined. Each has formed a decided resolution never to marry; they have both brilliant parts, and a constant flow of wit, and they agree in nothing but their resolution to lead a single life. The delight of *Beatrice* is to play off her raillery on *Benedick*, and he, in his turn, is a match for her at her own weapons. They wage a war of repartee, and their wit is beat to and fro between them with as much celerity, as if it were a game of battledore and shuttlecock. The scheme, that makes the first impression

pression on *Benedick* in favour of *Beatrice*, is artfully contrived, and we are pleased to see her, in a short time after, fall into the same snare. A new device was unnecessary; we like to see her bite at the same bait, and renounce at once all her former sentiments. We may here observe that Ben Jonson has done the same thing in his comedy of *Every Man in his Humour: Kitely* and his dame are both deceived, for their own good, by one and the same story. The play of *Much ado about Nothing* ends in a manner highly agreeable to the audience. We rejoice to see the sparring wits, who had forsworn the tender passion, on a sudden revolution of sentiment, deeply enamoured of each other. The play had great success. Mrs. Pritchard was Garrick's rival in every scene: which of them deserved the laurel most was never decided; but their united

united merit was such, that *Much ado about Nothing* continued to be a favourite comedy, as long as that excellent actress chose to perform the part. She resigned it in favour of her daughter, and the play lost half its value.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

IRENE, *a Tragedy by* Dr. JOHNSON—*The Story on which it is founded—The Fable—The Beauties and Defects of the Piece—It's Failure on the Stage*—CIBBER'S *Dramatic Rules*—MEROPE, *a Tragedy by* AARON HILL—*The Writer's Quarrel with* POPE—VOLTAIRE'S MEROPE—*Observations on that Play*—Lord BOLINGBROKE'S *Letter to* AARON HILL—*Success of the English* MEROPE.

IN February 1749, Dr. Johnson produced his tragedy of *Irene*; the play, as it seems, which his friend Walmsley says, in his letter* of the 2d March 1737, the author was carrying with him to London to try his fortune. *Irene* languished in silence from that time, till

* See the Appendix No. II.

his

his friend Garrick became manager, and then all difficulties were removed. The subject is taken from a passage in *Knolle's History of the Turks*, where we are told, that Mahomet, the Sultan, being reproved by his courtiers for dedicating his hours to the fair *Irene*, and withdrawing his attention from the business of the empire, was touched to the quick by so severe a reproach. To reinstate himself in the good opinion of his subjects, he summoned a meetiug of the grandees, and having ordered *Irene* to attend, he drew his sabre, and struck off her head. Upon this story a dramatic superstructure was to be raised. Invention was to find materials, to furnish, as Voltaire expresses it, the long carriere of five acts, which it is so difficult to do without subordinate episodes. In this Johnson was not deficient. *Cali Bassa*, the first Vizier, enters into a conspiracy with

two

two Greeks against the Sultan. *Demetrius*, one of the Greeks, mourns over the ruin of his country, and is further instigated by his love of *Aspasia*, whom he is resolved to rescue from a state of bondage. *Mahomet*, in the interval, devotes his time to *Irene*, who at last turns apostate, and renounces her religion for flagitious grandeur. The catastrophe is brought forward by a detection of *Cali Bassa*, who, on the rack, drops some words that tend to impeach *Irene*. The enraged Sultan orders her to be strangled, and, execution being done, he finds too late that she was innocent. In all this, there is certainly business enough; but the business proceeds without an incident to alarm the passions, in a calm philosophic stile. Every scene abounds with sentiment, but has no emotion to agitate the heart.

It is true that the dialogue is carried on with great richness of expression, and harmonious numbers; but beautiful versification will make a fine poem, though not a tragedy. It is to be regretted that *Johnson* had not considered, with due attention, the rule laid down by Horace, who says, it is not enough that the poem is beautiful; it should be affecting, and of force to raise a storm of passions, a whirlwind in the soul:

> Nec satis est pulchrà esse poemata, dulcia sunto,
> Et quocunque volent, animum auditoris agunto.

There is a passage in Cibber's life, that places the doctrine of Horace in the clearest light; and though Cibber cannot be cited as a legislator in criticism, yet as a man of experience, who attended to the secret causes of stage-effect, he deserves the attention of all dramatic writers.

writers. He says, "I will but just speak a "word or two to any author, who has not yet "writ one line of his next play. What I "would say to him is this: Sir, before you "put pen to paper, think well, and princi- "pally of your design, or chief action, to- "wards which every line you write ought to "be drawn, as to its centre. If we can say "of your finest sentiments, this or that might "be left out, without maiming the story, de- "pend upon it that fine thing is said in a "wrong place; and, though you may urge, "that a bright thought is not to be resisted, "you will not be able to deny, that those "very fine lines would be much finer, if you "could find a proper occasion for them; "otherwise, you will be thought to take less "advice from Aristotle and Horace, than from "*Bayes* in the *Rehearsal*, who very smartly

" says, *What the devil is the plot good for,*
" *but to bring in fine things?* When your
" fable is good, every part of it will cost you
" much less labour to keep your narrative
" alive, then you will be forced to bestow up-
" on these elegant discourses, that are not ab-
" solutely conducive to your catastrophe, or
" main purpose. It is but a melancholy com-
" mendation of a fine thought, to say when
" you have heard it, *Well! but what's all*
" *this to the purpose?*

" THERE are three plays by Banks, the *Earl*
" *of Essex*, *Anna Bullen*, and *Mary Queen*
" *of Scots*, which, though they are written
" in the most barbarous stile, that ever was
" able to keep possession of the stage, have all
" interested the hearts of his auditors. There
" is something so happy in the disposition of

all

" all his fables; All his chief characters are
" thrown into such natural circumstances of
" distress, that their misery or affliction wants
" very little assistance from the ornaments of
" stile. After what I have observed, when-
" ever I see a tragedy defective in its fable,
" let there be ever so many fine lines in it, I
" hope I shall be forgiven, if I impute that de-
" fect to the idleness, the weak judgement, or
" barren invention, of the author."

Had Dr. Johnson adopted Cibber's doctrine, he might have proved, as Mr. Walmsley hoped he would, a great dramatic poet. *Irene* was, with some opposition, acted nine nights, and then laid on the shelf. The united powers of Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Cibber, and Mrs. Pritchard could not raise it into vogue. The play, however, will always be considered as a fine

poem; the moral sentiments, the splendid diction, and the musical cadence of the versification, will ever be admired in the closet.

AARON HILL was the next author after Dr. Johnson. In the month of March 1749, his tragedy of *Merope* was acted at Drury-Lane. The author was well known to the public by a variety of productions in prose and verse, but chiefly by his translation of the *Zaire*, and *Alzire* of Voltaire. The first of those two plays made its appearance on the stage in 1736, and had the honour of introducing the celebrated Mrs. Cibber, who, from that time, was universally admired as the most pathetic and melodious actress that ever charmed the public ear. Aaron Hill was a man of an enlarged and comprehensive mind. He had the misfortune to fall beneath his rank, and join the Grub-

Grub-street race in a libel on Mr. Pope, who took occasion in the *Dunciad* to express his resentment, and, at the same time, to do justice to the talents of the man. Among the heroes, who are described leaping into *Fleet-ditch*, Pope says,

> Then Hill essay'd; scarce vanish'd out of sight,
> He buoys up instant, and returns to light,
> He bears no token of the sable streams,
> And mounts far off among the swans of Thames.

Pope's resentment does not seem to have been very strong, since he barely mentions the offence, and ends with an elegant compliment. But that compliment did not soften Aaron Hill's indignation. He took fire, and expostulated in a stile of towering pride, and violent anger. Pope was convinced that he had acted with great moderation; he, therefore, replied

to the letters sent to him on the occasion, in terms of civility, not being willing to keep alive a paper war with a man, who was protected by Lord Bolingbroke.

VOLTAIRE's tragedy of *Merope* was derived from remote antiquity. In the time of Aristotle there was a play on the subject by *Euripides*. That great critic, speaking of the incidents that tend to excite sensations of terror and pity, observes, that when a person is murdered by one, who does not know the object of his fury, but learns the truth as soon as the deed is committed, we have then presented to us a fine tragic situation; but he adds, there is still another method, and that is the mode adopted by *Euripides* in his tragedy of *Cresphontes*, where *Merope* is on the point of killing her son, whom she tenderly loves,

but

but does not know him at the time, and then most happily recognizes him in the moment when she is ready to plunge a poinard in his heart. This is the situation which Aristotle thinks the finest and most pathetic that can be invented. The mother is saved from a scene of horror, and the innocent son is rescued from immediate death. *Euripides's* tragedy has perished in the wreck of time, but the subject appeared to be so truly tragical, that various authors in Italy and France have at different times tried their strength in this bow of Ulysses. Voltaire mentions them by name, but says, they all disfigured the story by episodical and uninteresting love-plots. At length Scipio Maffei produced a simple and well-connected fable. This was the platform upon which Voltaire went to work. His tragedy has been always justly admired. Our

English *Merope* has not the same claim to applause. In the preface, Aaron Hill says, in his usual lofty tone, that he *has retouched for Mr. Voltaire's use the characters in his high boasted Merope.* This looks like a spirit of emulation, and naturally leads us to expect great alterations and considerable improvements. Nothing of the sort occurs; the translator follows his author in a regular series, scene by scene. The dialogue, indeed, is somewhat varied, that is, the speeches do not expand to an unnatural length, according to the French manner. On this head Aaron Hill speaks as follows: "Our unpolished London "stage (as Voltaire assumes the liberty of "calling it) has entertained a nobler taste of "dignified simplicity than to deprive drama-"tic poetry of all that animates the passions, "in pursuit of a cold, starved, tame, absti-

"nence,

" nence, which, from an affectation to shun " figure, sinks into flatness, an elaborate es- " cape from energy into a grovelling, weari- " some, bald, barren, unalarming, chillness of " expression, that emasculates the mind instead " of moving it." After this high-flown rant, we expect that dignified simplicity which has been mentioned with an air of superiority, and yet we have nothing but a strained, far-fetched, and uncommon use of words, without harmony in the versification, in many places grating to the ear. There is extant a letter * from Lord Bolingbroke to the author, in which that great master of stile says, " *We* " *have doubted (Mr. Pope and I) whether* " *in some sentences the utmost effort of lan-* " *guage has not obscured the beauty and*

* See the Appendix, No. VI.

" *force*

"*force of thought.*" This certainly was the constant error of Aaron Hill's stile; we perceive in all his works an elaborate attempt to avoid flatness: His notion was, that to be impressive, the language must be forced and distorted; and yet, notwithstanding these defects, the tragedy of *Merope* was received with the warmest applause. Mrs. Pritchard in the character of the mother, and Garrick, in that of her son, made the spectators pant with terror and pity, and at last drew tears of joy from every eye. The house was crowded during the run of the play, and, after great success, was closed at the usual time.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Garrick's Marriage with Violetti—*Resigns the Part of* Othello *to* Barry, *and acts that of* Iago—*The Play of* Much Ado about Nothing *grows into great Vogue on Account of the frequent Passages alluding to* Garrick's *Marriage*—Edward the Black Prince, *a Tragedy, by* William Shirley, *a Merchant at Lisbon*—*Defects of the Play.*

IN the month of July, Garrick entered on a new scene of life. He married the fair Violetti, a native of Vienna, who chose to grace herself with an Italian name. She was an elegant figure, and, as a dancer, greatly admired for the uncommon charm, which she displayed in all her movements. Previous to this match, it is certain that Garrick was on the point of marrying

marrying Mrs. Woffington. This writer has heard her declare at different times, that he went so far as to try the wedding-ring on her finger. But Violetti was patronized by Lord and Lady Burlington, who, it was generally understood, gave her a fortune of six thousand pounds, the sum bequeathed her by Garrick's will, in addition to other considerable legacies.

September 1749, to June 1750.

EARLY in this season Garrick gave a strong proof of his regard for Barry. He had already contributed greatly to advance his reputation by assigning to him the character of *Romeo*, and he now resolved, in a very generous manner, to make another sacrifice: that was by abdicating for ever the part of *Othello*; and, by that act, fairly acknowledging Barry's great excel-

excellence in the *Moor of Venice*. Nor was this all: in order to give new attraction to the play, he took to himself the part of *Iago*, content to be subordinate to Barry. He took care, however, not to let himself down by his new arrangement. To a genius like his, all forms and shapes, though different from each other, were perfectly adapted. The several modes of mind that so strongly mark *Iago's* villainy, were wonderfully expressed; and, by consequence, the attention of the public was equally divided between the two great performers.

THE comedy of *Much Ado about Nothing* was acted alternately with the play of *Othello*, and was in greater vogue than ever. A number of circumstances concurred to make it a favourite play. The small wits nibbed their pens upon the occasion of Garrick's marriage,

and

and lampoons, epigrams, sonnets, epithalamiums, fluttered in every coffee-house. To give a check to the malice of the day, Ned Moore wrote an ironical satire, in which he was able to anticipate every topic of malevolence, and thereby to silence the scribblers, and take their trade out of their hands. In two remarkable lines, he said that Garrick would be

> A very *Sir John Brute* all day,
> And *Fribble* all the night.

Amongst all their envenomed shafts, the Grub-Street witlings could find nothing so keen. To give them the finishing blow, *Much Ado about Nothing* was revived. The passages in the part of *Benedick*, applicable to Garrick's own case, occasioned infinite mirth, such as, "*Here you may see* Benedick *the married*

" married man!—I may chance to have some " odd quirks and remnants of wit broken " on me, because I have railed so long " against marriage:—But shall quips and " sentences, and paper bullets of the brain " awe a man from the career of his humour? " No; the world must be peopled.—When " I said, I would die a batchelor, I did not " think I should live to be married." These several strokes of humour excited the loudest applause, and Garrick gained a complete triumph over all the Pasquinades of the day.

TOWARDS the beginning of December 1749, a new tragedy was presented by William Shirley, intitled *Edward the Black Prince*, attempted after the manner of Shakespeare. But the manner of Shakespeare is not within the reach of ordinary writers: it is distinguished by

by two peculiarities: the first is his neglect of all regular design in the construction of his fable, without any regard to the unity of action, without order, and often without connection, crowding together a multiplicity of incidents, and a number of episodical characters. This method, if it deserves that name, may be easily attained: but, whenever an author makes open profession of it, we may be sure, that he means, under a great name, to shelter his want of invention, or capacity to form a plot, that may serve to keep expectation alive, and, by probable means, lead to a pathetic catastrophe. But the grand art of Shakespeare is his manner of introducing, amidst the wildest confusion, unexpected incidents that rouze attention, and throw the passions into a violent conflict. This last was not in Shirley's power. The question in his

first

first scene is, whether the *Prince of Wales* shall engage with superior numbers of the enemy, and the same is repeatedly discussed to the end of the fourth act. In the fifth, we have the battle of Poictiers, with the unaffecting distress of two dying lovers intermixed with it. Shirley wrote his play at Lisbon; and, as appears by the date of his dedication, 10th November 1749, was at that place when his play was acted. It follows that he had no opportunity to consult able critics, and that circumstance may be his apology for a languid production. *Ribemont*, a Marshal in the French camp, is the best drawn character in the play, and was greatly executed by Mr. Barry. The *Black Prince* was too uniform, too cold, and tame, for such an actor as Garrick.

CHAP. XVI.

Tragedy of THE ROMAN FATHER, *by* WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, *Esq.—The Story in* LIVY, *on which the Play is founded—* CORNEILLE'S *Tragedy on the same subject—Observations on it—*CORNEILLE *passes Judgement on himself—Structure of* WHITEHEAD'S *Fable—The Incidents conducted with great Art—*GARRICK *in Old* HORATIUS, BARRY *in the Son, and Mrs.* PRITCHARD *in the Murdered Sister—Their various Excellence—Great success of the Play.*

IN the month of February 1750, the stage was enriched with the tragedy of *The Roman Father*, by Mr. William Whitehead. The subject is related by Livy in the first book of his history, and is in substance as follows: The Romans and Albans, both descended from the Trojans, who landed with Æneas in Italy, were

were united by ties of consanguinity. A war broke out between the two states. *Mucius Suffetius*, the Alban general, desired an interview with *Tullus Hostilius*, the King of Rome, and proposed to end the quarrel without an effusion of blood. There happened to be in each army three brothers of equal age; the *Horatii* on the side of Rome, and the *Curiatii* in the Alban army. They were chosen the champions of their country, and by their valour the fate of empire was to be decided. The signal being given, the combatants rushed on to the attack. Two of the Romans, after wounding their three antagonists, died on the spot. The surviving brother, in order to divide the force of the *Curiatii*, betook himself to flight. Seeing his enemies following him at a distance from each other, he turned short on the nearest, and having stretched him

on the field, advanced against the second, and gained another victory. The third was fatigued with his wounds, and disheartened by the death of his brothers. The victorious Roman exclaimed, "*I have sent two to the* "*shades below, and now I decide the con-*" *test.*" The young Alban fell, and the Roman army returned in triumph. The victorious hero met his sister at the gate of Rome. She was engaged in a marriage-contract with one of the slaughtered *Curiatii*; and, seeing on her brother's arm the scarf which she had wrought for her lover with her own hands, in a fit of frantic grief she tore her hair, and in loud exclamations, invoked the deceased in a gush of tears. Her brother was fired with indignation. He gave her a mortal stab, saying, as he struck, "*Go, with your ill-timed grief,* "*and seek your paramour in the shades* "*below.*"

" *below.*" A deed so atrocious, tarnished the splendour of his victory. He was accused before the King; but *Tullus Hostilius* chose to wave the decision from himself. He appointed, according to law, two magistrates, called Duumviri, to sit in judgement. The young man was pronounced guilty; but by the advice of *Tullus*, appealed to the people. Old *Horatius* was his advocate. He declared that his daughter deserved her fate; and, if he thought otherwise, he should exert the legal authority of a father, and punish a murderer with his own hand. At his intercession, the young hero was absolved by the people. The crime, as Florus expresses it, was merged in the glory of the conquest, *Facinus intra gloriam fuit.*

SUCH is the account given by Livy. Corneille, the great poet of France, so long ago as the year 1635, had given a tragedy on the subject. But, as he has conducted his fable, the unity of action is destroyed. We have, in fact, three distinct tragedies, namely, *The Victory over the Curiatii, The Death of Camilla* (called *Horatia* by Mr. Whitehead), and finally, *The Young Hero's Trial for Murder*. Corneille sat in judgement on himself. In his *Examen D'Horace,* annexed to his play, he had the candour to acknowledge the defects of his piece. He attempts, indeed, to justify the manner in which the victorious champion kills his sister. But surely, that event is not brought about with any thing like dramatic art. *Camilla* sees her brother adorned with the spoils of her lover, and her fury mounts to a blaze. She pours a torrent

torrent of invective in a speech of no less than sixty lines. Her brother is fired with resentment, and instantly draws his sword. She flies from him: he follows, and kills her behind the scenes, saying aloud, " *Go, and weep* " *for your Curiatius in the infernal shades*;" " *Va, dedans les enfers plaindre ton Cu-* " *riace.*" She cries out, " *Ah! traitre,*" and is heard no more. *Sabina,* sister to the *Curiatii,* and wife of the conqueror, fills the remainder of the fourth act with three long, tedious, and unimpassioned speeches. Corneille does not hesitate to condemn the fifth act; he says, it gave no satisfaction to the audience, being a string of pleadings, whereas declamation is wholly improper in the catastrophe. It may have place in the beginning, when the business is not warm and animated; but a fifth act calls for action, and harangues and

long discourses are then out of all time and place. *Tout ce cinquieme act est encore une de causes du peu de satisfaction que laisse cette tragedie: il est tout en plaidoyers, et ce n'est pas la la place des harangues, ou des longs discours; ils peuvent etre supportes en un commencement de piece, ou l'action n'est pas encore echauffee, mais le cinquieme acte doit plus agir que discourir.*

SUCH was the candour of Corneille. He was threatened with a criticism from the academy, like that which had been published on the *Cid*; but he consoled himself by saying, Horatius was condemned by the Duumviri, and absolved by the voice of the people.

MR. WHITEHEAD had the judgement to discard all redundancies and superfluous characters.

ters. The action of his play hinges entirely on the Roman father. He is principally interested in every incident, and by that judicious conduct the whole is made a regular and well connected fable. The death of *Horatia* is managed with great skill. Towards the close of the fourth act, she pours her curses on her brother and the Roman name. *Horatius* draws his sword, and by her father's order she is forced away. But nothing can appease her fury. Her friend *Valeria*, in the fifth act, tells how she provoked her fate. She desires to see her father and her brother: for that purpose she is brought on the stage, and a pathetic scene ensues. The people crowd to the house, demanding justice on the murderer. She forgives her brother, and expires. *The Roman Father* becomes an advocate for his son, and saves his life. Upon the whole, it must be acknowledged, that

that what the original divided into three distinct actions, is by Mr. Whitehead carried on with a coherence that gives the appearance of regular unity. There are no detached scenes, no unnecessary characters; no ambitious ornaments, and no speeches for mere parade. The author tells us, in his prologue, that he

> Stripp'd each luxuriant plume from fancy's wings,
> And tore up similies like vulgar things.
> Nay, ev'n each moral sentimental stroke,
> Where not the character, but poet spoke,
> He lopp'd as foreign to his chaste design,
> Nor spar'd an useless, tho' a golden line.

The play had every advantage in the representation. Garrick, who was peculiarly happy in personating old men, acquitted himself in the father with his usual ability; Barry had great merit in young *Horatius*, though the character was ill suited to his stile and manner, and

was

was not calculated to call forth all his powers; Mrs. Pritchard exerted herself in the service of Mr. Whitehead, who was a great admirer of her genius, and her warm friend on all occasions. Such performers, and the intrinsic value of the piece, made it a great favourite during a run of several nights.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

BARRY and MRS. CIBBER *revolt to Covent-Garden—*QUIN *joins them—*GARRICK *not dismayed by their Union—His Prologue on the Occasion—Acts the Part of* ROMEO *against* BARRY *and* MRS. CIBBER*—Both Houses repeat the same Play Twenty Nights running—*WOODWARD, *in* MERCUTIO*—The Public Opinion much divided between the Two* ROMEOS*—*CONGREVE'S *Tragedy of the* MOURNING BRIDE *revived at Drury-Lane—Part of the Plot admirably conducted—Description of the Temple admired by* DR. JOHNSON*—Meeting of* ALMIRA *and her Husband,* ALPHONSO*, well contrived, and pathetic—Pantomime of* QUEEN MAB.

September 1750, to June 1751.

IN the course of the summer a strong combination was formed for the support of Covent-Garden theatre. Barry and Mrs. Cibber revolted. They

They went over to the adverse camp, resolved to take the field under the banners of Quin, who had no doubt, but with such recruits, he should be able to humble the pride of Drury-Lane. The celebrated Mrs. Woffington was of their party. The news-papers drew up the forces in terrible array, and in pompous terms, gave notice of open war. Garrick saw a formidable phalanx, but was not dismayed. He opened his house on the 8th of September, with the following

PROLOGUE.

As heroes, states, and kingdoms rise and fall,
So (with the mighty to compare the small)
Through interest, whim, or, if you please, through fate,
We feel commotions in our mimic state,

The

The sock and buskin fly from stage to stage;
A year's alliance is with us an age.
And where's the wonder? all surprise must cease,
When we reflect how int'rest or caprice
Makes real kings break articles of peace.

Strengthen'd by new allies our foes prepare,
"Cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war."
To shake our souls, the papers of the day
Draw forth the adverse bands in dread array,
A pow'r might shake the boldest with dismay.

Yet fearless still, we take the field with spirit,
Arm'd *cap-a-pie* in self-sufficient merit.
Our ladies too, with souls and tongues untam'd,
Fire up, like Britons, when the battle's nam'd.
Each female heart pants for the glorious strife,
From Hamlet's mother, * to the Cobler's wife.

* Mrs. Britchard, and Mrs. Clive in the *Devil to Pay.*

Some

Some few there are whom paltry passions guide,
Desert each day, and fly from side to side;
Others, like Swiss, love fighting as their trade,
For, beat or beating, they must all be paid.

Sacred to Shakespeare was this spot design'd,
To pierce the heart, and humanize the mind,
But if an empty house, the actor's curse,
Shews us our Lears and Hamlets lose their force,
Unwilling we must change the nobler scene,
And, in our turn, present you Harlequin;
Quit poets, and set carpenters to work,
Shew gawdy scenes, or mount the vaulting Turk.
For though we actors one and all agree
Boldly to struggle for our vanity,
If want comes on, importance must retreat;
Our first great ruling passion—is to eat.

To keep the field, all measures we'll pursue;
The conflict glorious! since we fight for you.

And

And should we fail to gain the wish'd applause,
At least we're vanquish'd in a noble cause.

HAVING thus addressed the town, he shewed that his measures were well concerted. He foresaw that *Romeo and Juliet* would be the grand battery opened against him by the enemy. He had lectured Barry and Mrs. Cibber in that play, and now expected that they would employ his own weapons against himself. Accordingly he was determined to contend with them for victory. Though he had imparted his ideas to his antagonists, yet such a genius was not exhausted. To strike out new beauties in passages, where the most penetrating critic could not expect them, was his peculiar talent. It is certain, however, that he had no actress fit to enter the lists against Mrs. Cibber. To supply that deficiency, as well

well as circumstances would permit, he took under his tuition a young actress, who had given an early promise of rising merit. This was Mrs. Bellamy, from the Dublin theatre, of a graceful figure, and a good voice. Instructed by so great a master, she was able to make a stand, though not to dispute the laurel with Mrs. Cibber. Woodward, in *Mercutio*, was a tower of strength; a character so highly finished, so whimsical, yet natural, so eccentric, yet sensible, and altogether so entertaining, cannot be found in any play whatever, and no actor ever reached the vivacity of Woodward. The play was acted at Covent-Garden early in October, and Garrick declared war on the same day. Both houses continued to repeat it twenty nights, without intermission. Rich, at length, was tired of the contest. He announced another play, and

Garrick, as a signal of victory, played *Romeo* the one and twentieth time. The public, during the struggle, had reason to be discontented; they lost the pleasure of variety. The following Epigram appeared in the newspapers.

What play to-night, says angry Ned,
As from his bed he rouzes;
Romeo again! he shakes his head,
A pox on both your houses!

Garrick, however, had reason to rejoice. The grand battery of the enemy was silenced. Barry lost nothing by the contest; on the contrary, his performance was universally admired; he had in some passages such peculiar powers, that he was not to be excelled, perhaps not equalled. But Garrick's fertile genius was, in its turn, not to be rivalled. He struck out so many new lights, and raised such terror

and

and pity in the catastrophe, that the public opinion was much divided, and the palm of victory hung in suspense between the two competitors.

THE consequence of these measures was, that the Covent-Garden league was disconcerted, and Garrick was prepared to follow his blow. Before the end of October, he revived Congreve's tragedy of the *Mourning Bride*. Notwithstanding some defects, it must be admitted, that this is an interesting play. The language, it is true, in some places swells into too false grandeur, but is often natural and pathetic. The business in the two first acts is conducted with uncommon skill. *Almeria* thinks, that her husband, *Osmyn*, (whose real name is *Alphonso,*) was lost in a storm at sea, when she herself was saved from

the wreck. *Osmyn*, on his part, imagines that she perished in the deep. Their meeting is brought about by the most artful, yet probable means, at the tomb of *Anselmo*. *Almeria* enters the temple, and describes that awful structure in the following lines:

> No, all is hush'd, and still as death!—'tis dreadful!
> How reverend is the face of this tall pile,
> Whose ancient pillars rear their marble heads,
> To bear aloft its arch'd and pond'rous roof,
> Looking tranquillity! It strikes an awe
> And terror on my aching sight; the tombs
> And monumental caves of death look cold,
> And shoot a chillness to my trembling heart.

Of this passage, Dr. Johnson says, "that if he "were to select from the whole mass of "English poetry the most poetical paragraph, "he knows not what he could prefer to this "description." This writer remembers to have heard

heard him make the same remark in a select party of friends, when Garrick, always jealous for the honour of Shakespeare, began to repeat the description of Dover Cliff. "That," said Johnson, "is by no means applicable. "Man is there a considerable object; *half-* "*way down hangs one that gathers sam-* "*phire*; *dreadful trade!* In Congreve's "lines, Man has no concern; inanimate na- "ture produces the effect." In this view of the matter, Johnson was certainly right. *Almeria* proceeds to *Anselmo's* tomb, and in a flood of grief invokes her husband by his name. *Osmyn* says,

> Who calls that wretched thing that was Alphonso?
> Whence is that voice, whose shrillness from the grave,
> And growing to his father's shrowd, roots up
> Alphonso?

He comes forward, and, to his surprize, finds

Almeria. The scene between them is exquisitely tender. The contrivance of the poet to lead to this discovery will not easily be matched in any other play. The sequel of the plot cannot be much commended. By the fiery spirit of *Zara*, *Osmyn* is involved in the utmost danger, but is set at liberty in the fourth act, and appears no more till the last scene, in which he makes no considerable figure. The catastrophe gives us a two-fold pleasure; vice meets with the fate it deserves, and virtue is triumphant. The play, amidst some tumour and bombast, has many speeches, and a number of sentiments, clothed in just expression, and will at all times deserve to keep its rank on the stage.

GARRICK was used to say, that a good play was the *roast beef of Old England*, and that song

song and gawdy decorations were the *horse-redish* round the dish. But that kind of garniture he was now determined to provide for the public. Rich had formed a strong combination, and had encouraged Barry to break through his articles, and desert from his station at Drury-Lane. In order to retaliate, and attack the great Mr. Lun at his own weapons, he had concerted his measures, and, in conjunction with Woodward, laid the plan of a pantomime, entitled *Queen Mab.* It was exhibited in the Christmas holidays, with splendid decorations, a great pomp of machinery, and every thing that could *elevate and surprize.* Woodward was a most excellent *Harlequin,* and through the rest of the season the success was so great, that Rich began to tremble on his throne.

CHAP. XVIII.

GIL BLAS, *a Comedy, by* EDWARD MOORE—*The Hint from a Passage in the Romance of* LE SAGE—*An Account of* MOORE'S *Fable—The Play had no great Success—A Prologue of Humour spoken by* WOODWARD—ALFRED, *a Masque, altered by* DAVID MALLET, *from the Original written by* THOMSON *and Himself—It was a feeble Performance, and of Course was short-lived—*BEN JONSON'S *Comedy of* EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR, *with some Alterations by* GARRICK—BEN JONSON'S *Fable well conducted, and his Characters copied from Life—Prologue by* WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, Esq.—Dr. HILL'S *Attack on* GARRICK—GARRICK'S *Epigram in Answer.*

THOUGH Garrick had said in his Prologue at the opening of the season, that he might be forced to *quit Poets, and set Carpenters to work,* nothing could be farther from his thoughts. In the month of February 1751,

he presented the comedy of *Gil Blas*, by Edward Moore, the author of the *Foundling*. The story of *Aurora*, in the celebrated romance of Le Sage gave the ground-plot of Mr. Moore's fable. Before the play appeared, strong prejudices were entertained, and even impartial critics thought it a bold and hazardous undertaking. The work of Le Sage was in every body's hands, and the reader had formed an idea of *Gil Blas* according to his own imagination. This made it difficult for Garrick to personate such a character to the satisfaction of men, who went to the theatre with their own preconceived notions. The scene lay in Spain, and it was observed at the time, that in several instances there was a total departure from the manners of that country. The plot of the piece was conducted with considerable dramatic art; the dialogue was natural

part of one song. He would have done better, had he preserved almost all that came from the genius of his friend. The song alluded to, is the famous one of *Rule Britannia*, which has received no advantage from the alteration. The poem, as originally performed at Cliffden-house, at the request of his Royal Highness, Frederick, Prince of Wales, on the 1st of August 1740, will always afford the highest pleasure to the reader of taste in his closet. Garrick performed *Alfred*, but with all his powers he was not able to give celebrity to the piece. He hoped, it seems, when the eye was gratified with splendid scenery, and the ear charmed with vocal and instrumental music, that the play would have been crowned with brilliant success. He was much disappointed, and Mallet did not add a sprig of laurel to his brow.

September 1751, to June 1752.

GARRICK had such resources in himself, that the failure or cold reception of a new piece was never prejudicial to his interest. He performed his best parts in tragedy and comedy, and was always sure of attracting crowded audiences. But still, amidst all the hurry and bustle of his business, he found leisure to search for novelty in the rich stores of ancient wit. Zealous at all times for the honour of the English drama, he turned his thoughts to Ben Jonson. Having by his performance of *Abel Drugger*, made the *Alchymist* a favourite play, he chose to bring forward the comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*. Having carefully retouched the play in several passages, he added an entire scene in the fourth act between himself and *Dame Kitely*. To disguise his suspicions, he assumed an air of gaiety, but under that mask the corrosions

corrosions of jealousy were seen in every feature. Such was the expression of that various face, that the mixed emotions of his heart were strongly marked by his looks and the tone of his voice. *Every Man in his Humour* may be considered as one of Ben Jonson's best productions. The poet does not look for a romantic story, for improbable incidents, and marvellous fictions, such as have of late taken possession of the stage. He had his eye on human life, and thence collected his various characters. Each of them is distinguished by a peculiar oddity. They all move in by-walks, or underplots, but tend to one central point, and contribute to the solution of the main business. Ben Jonson, like a skillful chess-player, to use Dryden's comparison, by slow degrees draws up his men, and makes his *pawns* subservient to his greater persons.

Kitely's

Kitely's jealousy is inflamed by a set of rakes, who are pursuing their own pleasures, without any design to disturb his peace of mind. *Wellbred, Dame Kitely's* brother, embroils her and her husband by his account of *Cobb's* house; and thus, at the end of the fourth act, the business is wound up to a crisis, but how it is to end, cannot be foreseen. The several persons, having separate grounds of complaint, apply to a magistrate. They all meet before *Justice Clement. Dame Kitely* tells him, that *Cobb's* house is a place of ill fame; and that she went thither in quest of her husband. "*Did you find him there?*" says the *Justice.* In that insant *Kitely* interposes, saying, in a sharp eager tone, "*I found her* "*there.*" He who remembers how Garrick uttered those words, slapping his hand on the table, as if he made an important discovery, must

must acknowledge, trifling as it may now be thought, that it was a genuine stroke of nature. *Bobadil* charges *Downright* with an assault, but the *Justice* is of opinion that the soldier, who tamely received a blow, met with his deserts. All mistakes between the parties are cleared up, and *Kitely* is cured of his jealousy.

It must be added, that a comedy, so completely acted, was hardly ever seen on the English stage. Garrick, Woodward in *Bobadil*, Yates, and Shuter, and indeed all the performers were so correct and natural, that the play drew crowded audiences, and kept possession of the stage during the manager's life. The prologue was written by William Whitehead, Esq. * with his usual neatness.

* See the Appendix, No. VIII.

A passage of it deserves to be inserted in this place.

> Boldly he wrote, and boldly told the age,
> He dar'd not prostitute the useful stage;
> But rather beg'd they would be pleas'd to see
> From him such plays, as other plays should be;
> Would learn from him to scorn a motley scene,
> And leave their monsters to be pleas'd with men.

The doctrine expressed in the last line ought to be inculcated in the present age, for the consideration of the public at large, and our modern managers.

An anecdote that occurred at this time, between Garrick and Dr. Hill, of famous memory, may be properly mentioned in this place. The Doctor, it is well known, was the author of a paper called *The Inspector*. He had, for reasons best known to himself, a

strong antipathy to Garrick, and took every opportunity to detract from his merit. To do this effectually, he wrote a long elaborate essay, to prove that Barry was the greatest actor on the stage. In the same critical dissertation, he thought fit to mention that great actress, Mrs. Porter, but, by a mistake, he talked of her as dead, though she was then, at a very advanced age, living at Hempstead. Garrick availed himself of this blunder, and replied in the following epigram:

O thou profound, polite, wise, gay *Inspector*,
Chosen by thy gracious self our taste's director!
Who lay'st poor Porter, yet *alive*, in earth,
And giv'st to Barry matchless fame and worth,
Thy pen we all must reverence and dread,
Which kills the *living*, and revives the *dead*.

Though Barry, as Garrick always acknowledged

ledged with the greatest candour, was a most excellent performer, and though there was a strong combination at Covent-Garden, the revived play of *Every Man in his Humour*, continued to attract full houses for a number of nights.

CHAP. XIX.

FOOTE's *Farce of* TASTE—*A keen Satire on the Arts of Auctioneers, and the Folly of Connoisseurs*—GARRICK's *Excellent Prologue in the Character of an Auctioneer*—EUGENIA, *a Tragedy by* Dr. FRANCIS—*The Play taken from a French Comedy, and, without a Tragic Situation, called a Tragedy, for no other Reason than because it is written in Blank Verse*—*The Comedy of* LOVE's LAST SHIFT, *by* COLLEY CIBBER *revived with considerable Success*—CONGREVE's *Opinion of the Play, as related by* CIBBER *himself*—WOODWARD *in* SIR NOVELTY FASHION.

IN the month of January 1752, Mr. Foote presented a farce, to which he gave the title of *Taste*. The design was to expose to ridicule the fashionable folly of what is called *virtu*, which in general is a pretended enthusiastic passion for the arts, without any skill or knowledge,

ledge. The piece, at the same time, discovered the tricks and various frauds committed by auctioneers and dealers in pictures, medals, busts, and pretended works of antiquity. The famous Jemmy Worsdall, well known as a painter, but more eminent for a peculiar vein of wit and humour, joined Mr. Foote in the business, and in many of the satirical passages. The character of *Lady Pentweazle* was written and acted by Worsdall. The scene between her and *Carmine*, the painter, to whom she sits for her picture, was full of wit and pleasantry. But, upon the whole, the subject was by no means popular. It was relished by the boxes only, and was, therefore, after a short run of four or five nights, discontinued, but in a week afterwards, was repeated once more, for the benefit of Mr. Worsdall. The prologue was written and delivered by

Mr. Garrick, in the character of an auctioneer. The critics admired it, but thought that it anticipated the wit and humour of the scenes that followed. It will entertain the reader more than any thing this writer can add.

PROLOGUE.

BEFORE this court, I, Peter Puff, appear,
A Briton born, and bred an auctioneer;
Who for myself, and eke a hundred others,
My useful, honest, learned, bawling brothers,
With much humility and fear implore ye,
To lay our present desp'rate case before ye.

'Tis said, this night a certain wag intends
To laugh at us, our calling, and our friends.
If lords and ladies, and such dainty folks,
Are cur'd of auction-hunting by his jokes;
Should this odd doctrine spread throughout the land,
" Before you buy, be sure you understand,"

Oh!

Oh! think on us what various ills will flow,
When great ones only purchase what they know.

Why laugh at *Taste*? it is a harmless fashion,
And quite subdues each detrimental passion;
The fair one's heart will ne'er incline to man,
While thus they rage for China and Japan.
The virtuoso too, and connoisseur,
Are ever decent, delicate, and pure.
The smallest hair their looser thoughts might hold,
Just warm, when single, and when married, cold,
Their blood at sight of beauty gently flows,
Their Venus must be old, and want a nose.
No am'rous passion with deep knowledge thrives,
'Tis the complaint indeed of all our wives.

'Tis said, virtù to such a height is grown,
All artists are encourag'd but our own.
Be not deceiv'd, I here declare on oath,
I never yet sold goods of foreign growth;

Ne'er sent commissions out to Greece or Rome,
My best antiquities are made at home!
I've Romans, Greeks, Italians, near at hand,
True Britons all, and living in the Strand.
I ne'er for trinkets rack my pernicranium,
Nor furnish out my rooms from Herculaneum.
But hush!
Should it be known that English are employ'd,
Our manufacture is at once destroy'd,
No matter what our countrymen deserve,
They'll thrive as ancients, but as moderns starve;
If we should fail, to you it will be owing,
Farewell to arts! they're going, going, going!
The fatal hammer's in your hands, O town;
Then set us up, and knock the poet down.

THE author of the farce was, in fact, knocked down by the general opinion in five nights. Soon after this, Dr. Francis, the translator of Horace and Demosthenes, excited the public

public expectation, by the promise of a tragedy, intitled *Eugenia*; but that expectation was much disappointed. From a man, who, it was supposed, had considered and studied the rules of the drama, it was a strange experiment. *Eugenia* is nothing more than a translation of a French comedy, written in the preceding year by Madam Graffigny, under the name of *Cenie*. It might have been offered as a sentimental comedy in blank verse; but, as it is, without any material alteration in the fable, without an incident to raise tears and pity, and without a circumstance of distress in the catastrophe, it has no pretension to be called a tragedy. The versification is not void of harmony; the language, in general, is pure, and even elegant, but often turgid, and, of course, unnatural. The part of *Mercour* was unworthy of such an actor as Garrick. A man

of

of his nice discernment could not but see the defects of the piece, but he was willing to pay a compliment to the translator of Horace. The play lingered on the stage nine nights, and then was heard no more.

WHENEVER a failure of this sort happened, the manager, who had judgement enough to foresee the event, concerted his measures before hand, and was ever ready with novelty to keep alive the attention of the public. For this purpose, he revived the comedy of *Love's Last Shift*, the first production of Colley Cibber, so long ago as the year 1695. The author tells us, in his life, that Lord Dorset, then Lord Chamberlain, said to him, "that "it was the best first play that any author, in "his memory, had produced." Cibber further adds, that his play was crowned with success

by the honour done him by Sir John Vanbrugh, who wrote his *Relapse*, as a sequel, or second part to *Love's Last Shift*. Of this circumstance he had great reason to be proud; and yet, the man, who has been charged with consummate vanity, by his adversaries, had the candour to tell us, "that *Love's Last Shift*, "which (as Congreve justly said of it) had "only in it a great many things that were *like* "wit, but in reality were *not* wit; and what is "still less pardonable, had a great deal of puerility and frothy stage-language; yet, by the "mere moral delight received from its fable, "it has been in a continued possession of the "stage for more than forty years."

So fair an account from the author himself supersedes the necessity of any further criticism. In the character of *Loveless*, which was

was originally played by Wilks, Garrick presented the liveliest portrait of a debauched and ruined town-rake, who had abandoned his wife, and at last, recovering his moral sense, is cordially reconciled to her. *Amanda* is happy to re-enter the state of conjugal affection, and, after saying, *We all have drawn our several prizes in the lottery of human life*, she embraces her reclaimed libertine. Mrs. Porter originally performed the part, but Mrs. Pritchard most amply compensated for the loss of that celebrated actress. Cibber lived to see *Sir Novelty Fashion* in Woodward's hands, as great a favourite as he ever was in his own life time. Upon the whole, the play was revived with great success, and, with an occasional intermixture of Garrick's capital parts in tragedy, kept Drury-Lane theatre in a flourishing state to the usual time of closing the season.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

MOSSOP, *from the Dublin Theatre, engaged at Drury-Lane—Account of his Dramatic Powers—He excelled in several Characters, and particularly in* ZANGA, *in the* REVENGE—*The* BROTHERS, *a Tragedy, by the celebrated* Dr. YOUNG—*The Story, on which the Play is founded, as related by* LAVT—*The Epilogue written by* MALLET, *gave great Offence to* Dr. YOUNG.—*He disdained to publish it with his, Play, and, in its Room, gave an* HISTORICAL EPILOGUE—*The Profits of the Play, with an Additional Sum, amounting in all to a Thousand Pounds, were given by the Author to the Society for propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts*—GARRICK *and* MOSSOP *excellent in the Two Brothers*—HARLEQUIN FORTUNATUS, *a Pantomime*—*The* GAMESTER, *a Tragedy, by* EDWARD MOORE—*A Play of Domestic Distress, written in Prose, well conducted, pathetic, and moral*—BEVERLEY, *the unhappy Gamester, acted by* GARRICK—MRS. PRITCHARD *universally admired in* MRS. BEVERLEY—*An excellent Prologue, written and spoken by* GARRICK.

September 1752, to June 1753.

IN the beginning of this season, it appeared that Garrick had imported a young actor from Dublin. This was the celebrated Mr. Mossop, who

who had finished his education in the college; and was much esteemed by his contemporaries for his literary accomplishments, and the good qualities that composed his character. He had conceived an early inclination for the stage; and possessed many of the requisites for that profession. He began his career in Dublin, and his fame rebounding in England, he was invited to Drury-Lane. His figure, rising above the middle size, was in just symmetry and proportion, but his dancing master deserved no kind of praise. His movements wanted ease and grace, but that defect was overlooked on account of his superior excellence. His voice was manly, strong, and of great compass, without the melody of Barry, but harmonious from the lowest note to the highest elevation. His first appearance on the London stage, was early in September, in the

character

character of *Richard III.* an arduous undertaking, but, notwithstanding Garrick's superior excellence, he met with unbounded applause. The tender notes of love, of pity, and soft affection, did not belong to Mr. Mossop, but in scenes of rage and terror he made a deep impression. Dryden's *Don Sebastian* was revived to give him an opportunity of making a figure in the part of *Dorax*. *Coriolanus* was another character, which he performed with great ability. *Zanga*, in the *Revenge*, was his grand performance, and in this, even Quin was not superior to him. Garrick found in him a strong reinforcement. With so good a *Pierre*, he was able to resume the character of *Jaffier*; and, being likewise provided with an excellent *Horatio*, he played *Lothario* in the *Fair Penitent*.

In the beginning of December came forth a tragedy from a genius of the first class, the celebrated Dr. Young, well known for the tragedy of the *Brothers*, in 1719, and the *Revenge*, in 1721, but chiefly admired for his satires, called the *Universal Passion*, and his poem of *Night Thoughts*. The motive, that induced Dr. Young, after being so long an alien to the stage, to produce his play, was at once a proof of his generosity, and an act of piety. He gave the profits of the author's nights to the *Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts*; and not content with this munificence, he added from his own purse money sufficient to make his present amount to the sum of a thousand pounds. The play attracted crowded audiences. The two brothers, *Perseus* and *Demetrius*, were admirably acted; the former by Mr. Mossop, and the latter by Mr. Garrick.

Garrick. The scene in the third act, where they both plead their cause before their father, *Philip of Macedon*, was interesting in the highest degree. It produced, with wonderful effect, the different powers of the two actors; namely, the stern sententious roughness of Mossop, and the smooth graceful eloquence of Garrick. Livy was Dr. Young's guide on this occasion. That great historian has related, with his usual elegance, the dark machinations of *Perseus* against his younger brother, *Demetrius*. He tells us, that *Philip*, the Macedonian monarch, summoned his two sons to his tribunal, and, after a pathetic speech, ordered them to plead their cause. He gives the speeches, first of *Perseus*, and then of *Demetrius*, at full length, in that charming flow of eloquence, which adorns the page of Livy*. The

* See lib. xl. chap. vi. to the end of chap. xv.

learned author of the *Brothers* had this great master of eloquence in his eye, and though his diction occasionally swells to a degree of tumour, it must still be acknowledged, that the contest between the brothers produces a vein of oratory not to be matched in any other play. The Roman historian gives an account of a second charge brought by *Perseus* against *Demetrius*, who falls, by the father's order, an innocent victim to the fabricated proofs exhibited by a wily politician*. We find in two subsequent chapters of the same book†, that *Philip of Macedon* was fully convinced of his son's innocence, and died at an advanced age of a broken heart. This is the subject which Dr. Young moulded into a most excellent tragedy. The fable is conducted with art; but *Erixene*, the Thracian princess, is not

* See Livy, lib. xl. chap. xxiv. † liv. and lv.

drawn

drawn with the tender touches of such a poet as Otway. She is far from an amiable character. The last scene, in which she and *Demetrius*, her lover, dispatch themselves, does not produce any thing like a pathetic catastrophe. The three lines spoken by *Philip*, when *Demetrius* dies at his feet, are the most affecting in the whole play.

> There Philip fell; there Macedon expir'd!
> I see the Roman eagle hov'ring o'er me,
> And the shaft broke, should bring her to the ground.

The Epilogue to this play was, at Garrick's request, written by Mr. Mallet, without much wit, and certainly with great indelicacy. Willing to turn the reverend author's plan to a jest, he thought fit to say,

> ——————The man must be a widgeon;
> Drury may propagate,—but not religion.

Dr. Young went once to Garrick's box, which was at the top of the house opposite to the king's side, to hear his play: he had not seen the Epilogue, but when the above lines came from the mouth of Mrs. Clive, he was highly offended at such coarse obscenity. Instead of publishing it at the end of his play, he added from his own pen an *Historical Epilogue*, which, since it sets forth the fate of *Perseus*, as related by Livy*, we presume, will not be unacceptable to the reader.

HISTORICAL EPILOGUE.

An Epilogue, thro' custom, is your right,
But ne'er perhaps was needful till this night.
To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,
But guilt's dread close our narrow scene denies.

* Lib. xlv. s. 39 and 40.

In

In history's authentic record read
What ample vengeance gluts *Demetrius'* shade;
Vengeance so great, that when the tale is told,
With pity some e'n *Perseus* may behold.

Perseus surviv'd, indeed, and fill'd the throne,
But ceaseless cares in conquest made him groan,
Nor reign'd he long; from Rome swift thunder flew,
And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw:
Thrown headlong down, by Rome in triumph led,
For this night's deed his perjur'd bosom bled:
His brother's ghost each moment made him start,
And all his father's anguish rent his heart.

When rob'd in black his children round him hung,
And their rais'd arms in early sorrow wrung;
The younger smil'd, unconscious of their woe,
At which thy tears, O Rome! began to flow,
So sad the scene! what then must *Perseus* feel,
To see Jove's race attend the victor's wheel?

To see the slaves of his worst foe encrease
From such a source! an Emperor's embrace!
He sicken'd soon to death, and, what is worse,
He well deserv'd, and felt the coward's curse:
Unpity'd, scorn'd, insulted, his last hour,
Far, far from home, and in a conqu'ror's pow'r;
His pale cheek rested on his shameful chain;
No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign;
No suit retards, no comfort sooths his doom,
And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.
Nor ends it thus: dire vengeance to compleat,
His ancient empire falling shares his fate.
His throne forgot! his weeping country chain'd!
And nations ask—where Alexander reign'd?

As public woes a prince's crimes pursue,
So public blessings are his virtue's due:
Shout, Britons, shout!—auspicious fortune bless!
And cry, "Long live—our title to success!"

The

The play, in the present juncture, ought to be revived, were it only for the sake of introducing the Epilogue, as there certainly never was a time when Britons had so much reason to offer up the concluding prayer with the most fervent ejaculation.

In the Christmas holidays, to alarm the monster-breeding breast of the Covent-Garden manager, a new pantomime was exhibited, under the title of *Harlequin Fortunatus*. This piece had all the marvellous incidents requisite in such wild productions, a fire, a jigg, a battle, and a ball, as Pope describes, and of course was much followed, till towards the end of January, a new tragedy varied the scene.

This was the *Gamester*, by Edward Moore. The author had reason to think, that his ene-

mies formed a party against *Gil Blas*, and to prevent a renewal of hostilities, was advised to have recourse to a stratagem. Mr. Spence, the admired author of an Essay on Pope's Odyssey, was the intimate friend of Mr. Moore. He gave his consent, that it should be circulated in whispers, that the *Gamester* was the production of his leisure hours. The story was believed, and had the desired effect. A tragedy founded on the ordinary transactions of life, and written in prose, is not common in England, and, perhaps, in the French and Italian drama, no instance of it can be found. Lillo seems to be the first, who made the distress of domestic life as interesting as the events that have attended heroes and unfortunate kings. His tragedy of *George Barnwell* is well known, and *Fatal Curiosity* has scenes that go to the inmost feelings of the heart.

heart. With that precedent before him, Mr. Moore planned his fable, with a moral design to paint forth the dangers of a passion for play, and the combinations formed by sharpers against the man of honour. The play begins with a scene of distress, and shews a family beggared by the arts of *Stukely*, a detestable character, but neither strained nor over-coloured. Unfortunately there are in the world too many originals to sit for such a picture. On the first night of the play, this writer happened to sit in a front box near a noted gambler of that day, who shrewdly observed of *Beverley*, "*The fellow from the very be-*
"*ginning is not worth a suskin: who would*
"*play a single rubber with him?*"

THE plot goes on in a regular climax, rising in every scene to higher misery, till at last

Stukeley's

Stukeley's villiany is fully detected, and *Beverly*, his victim, having swallowed a dose of poison, closes the whole with a most affecting catastrophe. Garrick throughout the play almost rose above himself. Mrs. Pritchard gave a specimen of the most natural acting that had ever been seen. She did not appear to be conscious of an audience before her: She seemed to be a gentlewoman in domestic life, walking about in her own parlour, in the deepest distress, and overwhelmed with misery. The play, though finely acted, did not live beyond twelve nights. It was said to be too affecting; but, perhaps, the polite inhabitants of the west end of the town, and the citizens, addicted to play, did not like to see their ruling passion attacked by the moral doctrine of Mr. Moore. The play has been of late years brought into vogue by the judicious perform-

ance

ance of Mr. Kemble, and the exquisite powers of Mrs. Siddons. The piece, of course, is universally known, and a further criticism is therefore unnecessary. The prologue *, written and spoken by Mr. Garrick, is a fine satire against gaming, and a powerful dissuasive from that ruinous passion.

* See the Appendix, No. IX.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

BOADICEA *a Tragedy, by* Mr. GLOVER, *the Author of* LEONIDAS—*The Story on which it is founded related by* TACITUS—*and from him translated into the English History—Critical Examen of* Mr. GLOVER's *Play—*GARRICK, MOSSOP, *and* Mrs. CIBBER, *excellent in their respective Parts—The famous* Mr. FOOTE *engaged at Drury-Lane—Speaks an excellent Prologue written by* GARRICK—*The Tragedy of* ZARA, *as translated from* VOLTAIRE, *revived at Drury-Lane—*GARRICK *a venerable Old Man in the Character of* LUSIGNAN—Mrs. CIBBER *made her first Appearance several Years before, in the Character of* ZARA, *and now resumed it with improved Talents—*VIRGINIA, *a Tragedy, by the Rev.* Mr. CRISP—*The Story of* APPIUS, *the Decemvir, and* VIRGINIA, *the Daughter of* VIRGINIUS, *as related by* LIVY—*The Play put into* GARRICK's *Hands by* Lady COVENTRY—*A fine stroke of acting by* GARRICK *in the last Act.*

IN the beginning of March, Garrick was ready with the tragedy of *Boadicea*, by Mr. Glover, the admired author of *Leonidas*. The subject is taken from a remote period, as related

related by Tacitus*, and from him translated by our English historians. The whole, condensed into a narrow compass, is as follows: *Paulinus Suetonius* was appointed by *Nero* to the command of the Roman army in Britain. Before his arrival, *Prasutagus*, the late King of the Icenians, a people inhabiting what is now called Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk, had, by his will, left his accumulated wealth to his daughter and the Roman Emperor, in equal shares. By that stroke of policy he hoped to provide at once for the tranquillity of his kingdom, and the welfare of his family. The event was otherwise: his dominions were ravaged by the Centurions; his palace was plundered; his wife, *Boadicea*, disgraced with cruel stripes; and his daughter deflowered. The whole country was considered as a legacy

* Annal. lib. xiv.

bequeathed

bequeathed to the rapacious Romans. While things were in this situation, *Suetonius* arrived in Britain. He found that the Isle of Mona, now Anglesea, was a strong hold, and the common refuge of the discontented Britons. He thought it a point of moment to dislodge them, and accordingly marched at the head of a strong army to attack the place. He carried it by storm: the religious groves of the Druids were demolished, and the island reduced to subjection.

While *Suetonius* was engaged in the siege of Mona, the Icenians rose in one general insurrection. They were joined by the Trinobantians, who inhabited the county of Middlesex. *Boadicea*, the Icenian Queen, in a warlike car, with her two daughters seated before her, drove through the ranks, by violent

lent exhortations enflaming the resentment of an exasperated people. A general massacre ensued. We are told that twenty thousand Romans were put to the sword. *Suetonius*, on the first alarm, marched back to London; and, having there collected a strong army, advanced against the enemy. *Boadicea* appeared with a warlike spirit, at the head of the lines, and "*Here*," she said, "*on this spot we "must either conquer or die with glory. "Though a woman, my resolution is fixed. "The men, if they please, may survive "with infamy, and live in bondage.*" A fierce engagement followed. The Romans prevailed, and made a general carnage. Neither sex nor age was spared. *Boadicea*, by a dose of poison, put an end to her life.

THESE were the materials which Mr. Glover had to mould into a tragedy. The first act opens with great magnificence, and was found throughout to be so grand and sublime, that the audience were in expectation of a play in every respect worthy of Mr. Glover. But the fable is not conducted with art. The historic character of *Boadicea* is degraded by a quarrel between her and *Dumnorix*. She is never seen after the third act. Towards the end of the play, a Roman officer informs us, that he found her in her tent expiring by a dose of poison. To make *Dumnorix* the principal character was the author's design, and to that *Boadicea* is sacrificed. The fortune of the field is decided at the end of the third act, in favour of the Romans, and, from that moment *Dumnorix* employs all his eloquence to reconcile his wife, *Venusia*, to the thought of

death, and teach her "*to hold it cheap, when "liberty is lost.*" That advice is repeated throughout the fourth and fifth acts, till at last he presents a bowl of poison to *Venusia*. She obeys, and dies soon after. *Dumnorix* weeps over her, and falls on his own sword. It is unnecessary to add, that this catastrophe made no impression: it was too long foreseen, and, by consequence, the piece ended in a cold, languid, and unimpassioned, manner. Garrick in *Dumnorix*, Mossop in *Ænobarbus*, Mrs. Cibber (who was then returned to her allegiance at Drury-Lane) in the character of *Venusia*, and Mrs. Pritchard in *Boadicea*, exerted their best efforts, but were not able to protract the life of the play beyond the twelfth night. The reader will recollect, that there is a tragedy on the same subject, called *Bonduca*, by Beaumont and Fletcher.

September 1753, to June 1754.

THE famous Mr. Foote engaged as an actor at Drury-Lane, for a certain number of nights, and on the 15th October, made his appearance on that stage. He had passed a great part of the preceding summer in France. During his absence, a report prevailed, and was circulated as a matter of fact in the newspapers, that Foote was condemned for some crime, and executed near Bourdeaux. What gave rise to such a rumour, was never known. He arrived in London about the middle of August, and, in his usual vein of humour, turned the story to a joke. Garrick took advantage of it, and wrote a most lively prologue on the subject*, which Foote delivered with the greatest pleasantry.

* See the Appendix, No. X.

IN

In November, the tragedy of *Zara*, translated in 1735, from the *Zaire* of Voltaire, by Aaron Hill, was revived. Mrs. Cibber resumed the part of *Zara*, glad of an opportunity to perform, with her improved genius, the character which first produced her before the public. She called forth all her powers, and charmed the public ear. Mossop distinguished himself in the part of *Osman*; and Garrick made *Lusignan* a most venerable and pathetic old man. The scene in which he accidentally sees a cross on *Zara's* arm, and by that circumstance is led to a most tender recognition of his daughter, deserves to be particularly mentioned, not only on account of Garrick's inimitable acting, but for another reason; because Voltaire borrowed it from Sir Richard Steel's *Conscious Lovers*.

Zara was received with great applause, and continued to be repeated to crowded audiences, till in February 1754; a new tragedy, under the title of *Virginia*, engaged the public attention. The subject is taken from the story of *Appius*, the Decemvir, who, in a fit of brutal lust, resolved to ruin the virtue of a beautiful virgin, the daughter of *Lucius Virginius*, a Roman centurion. *Virginia* was admired and loved by *Lucius Icilius*, who had lately been tribune of the people. She returned his love with equal ardour, and, with her father's consent, bound herself by a promise of marriage. The Decemvir was determined to surmount all obstacles, and, with that intent, employed his creature, *Claudius*, to claim her as his slave. To support so vile a fiction, he was ready with a fabricated tale, and a number of witnesses, suborned for the

the purpose. The cause was heard by *Appius*, on his tribunal, and, in spite of the strong reasoning and heartfelt eloquence of *Virginius*, his daughter was pronounced to be the property of a vile impostor. In that moment of the bitterest distress, the unhappy father plunged a dagger in *Virginia's* breast, chusing rather to see her dead, than led away in bondage. This was the last act of oppression committed by the Decemvirs. The people, fired with indignation, seceded in a body to Mount Aventine, and refused to return till the ten tyrants were obliged to abdicate. *Appius* was thrown into prison; and to escape from the prosecution instituted by *Virginius*, died by his own hand. The particulars, here crowded into a narrow compass, are related by Livy, in the third book of his history, with

all those graces of stile, that distinguish that admirable writer.

A FINER subject for a tragedy cannot be found in the annals of Greece and Rome; but to execute it with all the master-strokes of the sublime and tender, required a Shakespeare, an Otway, or, perhaps, such a genius as Rowe. It is not intended by this observation to pronounce judgement against *Virginia*. The fable, though it cannot boast of situations to alarm and agitate the heart, is conducted in regular order and a well-connected train of events. The Rev. Mr. Crisp, who wrote the play, seems to have been a scholar and a man of taste. He was related to, or patronized by, Lord Coventry. His Countess, the celebrated beauty of that day, as Garrick often related, drove to his house, and sent in word, that she

she had a moment's business. He went to the side of her carriage, "There, Mr. Garrick," said Lady Coventry, "I put into your hands a "play, which the best judges tell me will do "honour to you and the author." It was not necessary for her to say more: "*Those eyes* "*that tell us what the sun is made of*," as Dr. Young says in one of his tragedies, had all the power of persuasion, and even of command; Garrick obeyed, as if she had been a *tenth muse*, and prepared the play with the utmost dispatch. He, in the character of *Virginius*, Mossop in that of *Appius*, and Mrs. Cibber in *Virginia*, deserved the compliment paid to them by the author in his preface. The representation was attended by another advantage. Mrs. Yates, at that time Mrs. Graham, made her first appearance on the English stage, in the part of *Marcia*, and by her extraordi-

nary beauty, and an early promise of great talents, helped to give attraction to the piece. But the great stroke which crowned it with success, (which will appear almost incredible) was Garrick's manner of uttering two words. *Claudius*, the iniquitous tool of the Decemvir, claims *Virginia*, as a slave born in his house. He pleads his cause before *Appius* on his tribunal. During that time, Garrick, representing *Virginius*, stood on the opposite side of the scene, next to the stage-door, with his arms folded across his breast, his eyes rivetted to the ground, like a mute and lifeless statue. Being told at length that the tyrant is willing to hear him, he continued for some time in the same attitude, his countenance expressing a variety of passions, and the spectators fixed in ardent gaze. By slow degrees he raised his head; he paused; he turned round

in

in the slowest manner, till his eyes fixed on *Claudius*; he still remained silent, and after looking eagerly at the impostor, he uttered in a low tone of voice, that spoke the fullness of a broken heart, "*Thou traitor!*" The whole audience was electrified; they felt the impression, and a thunder of applause testified their delight. Pliny the elder, speaking of certain minerals, says, nature is never more fully displayed than in the minutest objects. This remark may be applied to the nice touches of such an actor as Garrick. *Rerum natura nusquam magis quam in minimis tota est.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

CREUSA, *a Tragedy, by* WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, Esq.—*The Subject far removed in the dark Ages of Antiquity—It is fabulously treated by* EURIPIDES *in his Tragedy of* ION—DACIER'S *Opinion of the Greek Play*—PERE BRUMOY *has translated it—His Judgement and Observations on the Fable*—MR. WHITEHEAD *has given it an Air of Historical Truth*—SCALIGER'S *Dramatic Rules*—WHITEHEAD *an exact Observer of these Rules—The Catastrophe is brought about with great Skill*—GARRICK *in* ALETES, MOSSOP *in* XUTHUS—Mrs. PRITCHARD *in* CREUSA.

IN the month of April 1754, Mr. Whitehead, the author of the *Roman Father*, put his tragedy of *Creusa* into rehearsal. This was at a late part of the season, but the author was going to travel with a young nobleman, and probably wished to carry his fame along with

with him. In a short advertisement, he tells us, that his subject is so ancient, so slightly mentioned by historians, and so fabulously treated by *Euripides* in his tragedy of *Ion* that he thought himself at liberty to make the story his own. Some glaring circumstances he was obliged to adhere to, and he endeavoured to render them probable. Dacier, in the Notes to his translation of Aristotle's Art of Poetry*, makes mention of the *Ion* of *Euripides*, and, with his usual good sense, observes, that *Merope*, recognizing her son in the moment when she was going to kill him, is an incident highly commended by the great master critic; he adds, that *Euripides* wrote a tragedy, in which the mother is on the point of killing her son, whom she does not know, while, at the same time, the

* Chap. xv. Note 6.

son,

son, in a like state of ignorance, is meditating the death of his mother. Both are undeceived. This, says Dacier, is the tragedy of *Ion*; and the double danger of two persons, closely allied by nature, but ignorant of each other, affords an interesting situation; but, upon the whole, when he considers the number of improbable circumstances involved in the fable, he is of opinion, that a tragedy, formed on the same plan, would have no chance of succeeding on the modern stage. That this observation is founded in truth, appears in the clearest light from the analysis of the *Ion* of *Euripides*, by Pere Brumoy, who is allowed to be the best of the French critics. His account of the play is drawn out, scene after scene, in regular succession, and is highly entertaining. Our curiosity is kept alive by the conduct of the fable, notwithstanding the machinery, the

interposition of the deities, and the glaring want of probability, that runs through the whole. One passage, in particular, deserves our notice, though it does not seem to be worthy of a place in a dramatic composition. Young *Ion* receives the train, that follows *Creusa* from Athens, in the temple of Apollo, and there passes some time in shewing the pictures that adorn the sacred dome. This undoubtedly is a strange employment, but our pleasure arises from the use which Virgil has made of it, when we find the Roman poet making it a capital beauty, in that fine situation in the temple of Carthage, where Æneas surveys the pictures that represent the wars of Troy. Upon the whole, Brumoy agrees with Dacier, and concludes with saying, "We "now clearly see that such a fable is by no "means adapted to the modern taste, and that

"a

" a tragedy, conducted on such a plan, would, " at present, have no chance of succeeding."

Mr. Whitehead, with great judgement, discarded the romantic circumstances, and moulded his plot with such due regard to probability, that what was in *Euripides* incredible fiction, has, by his contrivance, an air of historical truth. Aristotle requires, in every legitimate poem, a beginning, a middle, and an end. It is true, that when he has explained those terms, our understanding is satisfied, and we submit to the doctrine. But still the rule is too general. Scaliger gives us a more exact idea of the constituent parts of a tragedy. He mentions four grand requisites. The first he calls the *Protasis*, which is the opening of the business, with the characters of the persons of the drama, and an account, as far as necessary, of

of antecedent transactions. This is finely executed by Mr. Whitehead. *Creusa*, the Athenian queen, with *Xuthus*, her husband, and king of Athens, though an Æolian by his birth, are come to consult the oracle of Delphos. They have been married above fifteen years, and, having no issue, wish to explore the will of the gods, in order to settle the succession to the crown. It appears, moreover, that *Creusa* had been, before her alliance with *Xuthus*, married to a young Athenian, of the name of *Nicander*, who had been sent into perpetual banishment, by order of *Erictheus*, the king, and father of *Creusa*. By him she was mother of a son, who was called *Ion*. She conveyed the child, with great secrecy to the care of his exiled father, who was soon after reported to be dead. She believed the story, though it had no foundation in truth. *Nican-*

der

der, under the assumed name of *Aletes*, retired to an humble cottage on the borders of *Delphi*, and made his son, whom he called *Ilyssus*, an attendant on the Pythia, or priestess of Apollo. *Creusa*, on her arrival at the temple, sees the young *Ilyssus*, and is struck with the graces of his figure. Thus far we have Scaliger's *Protasis*. The second requisite, namely the *Epitasis*, or working up the plot, goes on in the second act. *Aletes*, who still conceals his real name, prevails on the Pythia to declare from the oracle, that *Ilyssus*, of the Æolian race, is heir to the crown of Athens. This *Aletes* conceives will incline *Xuthus* to embrace the measure; but out of this circumstance springs up a new difficulty. *Phorbas*, the confidential adviser of *Creusa*, hates the Æolian race, and declares a fixed resolution that no stranger shall succeed to the crown. *Creusa* is equally averse to

the

the Æolian line, while *Xuthus*, on the other hand, favours young *Ilyssus*, believing him to be an Æolian. A violent quarrel ensues between the king and queen. She afterwards agrees with *Phorbas*, that *Ilyssus* should be destroyed; and even desires that at the banquet poison may be administered to him. Thus far we have what Scaliger calls the *Epitasis*, or winding up the plot to a state of perplexity and impending danger. Unforeseen incidents arise, and they go on, working and rising higher in every scene. In this alarming situation, *Aletes*, in the fourth act, has an interview with *Creusa*, and there discovers himself to be *Nicander*. Another important secret follows: She learns that *Ilyssus* is her son. This is Scaliger's *Catastasis*. *Creusa* is involved in difficulties: She finds her loved *Nicander*, but she is married to *Xuthus*. Besides this, she has employed

Phorbas to destroy her own son. The fourth act ends in this confusion, which may well be called, the full growth of the fable. The *Lysis*, as Scaliger calls it, or the solution of the *Gordian knot*, still remains, and what turn affairs are to take, no one can foresee. In the fifth act, the mother flies to the banquet to save her son, whom she had doomed to death. A slave advances with a poisoned cup, and presents it to the youth. The mother seizes it, and, after giving another goblet to her son, swallows the mortal draught. The ingredients are slow in their operation: She retires to the temple, and with transport tells *Nicander*, that she has saved her son, and delivered herself from the power of *Xuthus*, with whom she could not live, when her first husband and the father of her child was still alive. But the distress still encreases: *Nicander* has received

ceived a mortal wound. He and *Creusa* take their last adieu of their son in the most pathetic terms, and expire. *Ilyssus*, now *Ion*, and heir to the crown of Athens, laments his condition, calling himself more an orphan now than when he knew no parents. A noble moral arises from the conduct of *Creusa*:

> ——————Upon herself alone
> She drew heav'n's vengeance, and too surely proves,
> That murder, but intentional, not wrought
> To horrid act, before th' eternal throne,
> Stands forth the first of crimes.

The stile throughout is such as consists with a just imitation of nature, pure and elegant, often poetical, but never aspiring to the false sublime; the sentiments are suited to the characters, and are frequently full of moral dignity.

I HAVE dwelt the longer on this play, because I think it a model of dramatic fable, which our modern writers would do well to take into their consideration, if they wish to form a regular, a probable, and coherent, plot. Mr. Garrick, in *Aletes* (or *Nicander*) appeared to great advantage: In his scenes with his son, *Ilyssus*, he delivered his moral precepts in the finest vein of elocution; and in the pathetic situations he penetrated every heart. Mossop supported the part of *Xuthus* with weight and energy. Mrs. Pritchard was always in high favour with the author, and her performance of *Creusa* shewed that she deserved it. The play, as well as I recollect, has not been acted for several years, but it is to be hoped, will be revived, whenever the public taste shall undergo a thorough reform.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Comedy of the CHANCES, *altered from* BEAUMONT *and* FLETCHER, *by the* Duke of BUCKINGHAM, *with some further Alterations by* GARRICK—Mrs. CIBBER *in* CONSTANTIA—*She had no Comic Powers*—Mrs. ABINGTON *succeeded to the Part*—GARRICK *and she made it a favourite Comedy*—BARBAROSSA, *a Tragedy, by* Dr. BROWNE—MOSSOP *in* BARBAROSSA—Mrs. CIBBER *in* ZAPHIRA—GARRICK *in* ACHMET, *or* SELIM—*The* FAIRIES, *an Opera, from the* MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM—BRITANNIA, *a Masque, by* MALLET—*A most excellent Prologue spoken by* GARRICK—VANBRUGH'S *Comedy of the* MISTAKE—GARRICK *and* Mrs. PRITCHARD *admirable in the Two Lovers*—WOODWARD *and* Mrs. CLIVE *in the Two Servants.*

September 1754, to June 1755.

WHENEVER Garrick appeared in any of his capital parts, either in tragedy or comedy, he was sure of attracting crowded audiences. But

aware that variety was necessary, he devoted his time every summer to our best English authors. This was his constant plan, and it must be allowed to be the true ambition of a manager, as from that source the public derived a two-fold pleasure; their love of novelty was gratified, and they saw with pride the literary merit of ancient times.

THE comedy of the *Chances*, altered from Beaumont and Fletcher, by Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was brought forward early in this season. After a careful perusal, Garrick pruned it of all its indecencies, and retouched it in various places. The fable is active, busy, and intricate. The mistakes occasioned by the opposite characters of the two *Constantias*, give spirit and vivacity to the whole piece. Garrick performed *Don John* with exquisite humour,

humour. The same cannot be said of Mrs. Cibber, who insisted on playing the *Second Constantia*, a lively whimsical character, ill adapted to that tender voice, which in tragedy melted every eye in tears. It was reserved for the comic genius of Mrs. Abington, some years afterwards, to shew *Constantia* in all the colours of a gay coquette. The play, from that time, became a favourite entertainment.

Fond, however, as Garrick was of the old masters of the drama, he still was ready to shew every mark of attention to the talents of contemporary writers. He had kindled a spirit of emulation in the minds of classic scholars, who now employed their leisure hours in writing for the stage. In this number was the Rev. Dr. Browne, the famous author of *Essays on the Characteristics of*

Lord Shaftsbury. Though a clergyman of high reputation, he did not think poetry inconsistent with his profession; on the contrary, he agreed with Milton, who says, "*Tragedy, "as it was anciently composed, hath been "ever held the gravest, moralest, and most "profitable, of all other poems.*" *Barbarossa* was acted early in December. History affords but slender materials. The poet was obliged to mould a fable from his own invention, if that may be called invention, which draws its chief supplies from other plays. *Zaphira* is a tender mother, and like *Merope*, in Voltaire's tragedy, believes that *Selim*, her son, is dead. She deplores his loss, but is not on the point of killing him. So far the most interesting scene of the original is lost in Dr. Browne's imitation. The African tyrant, like *Poliphontes*, is in love. He pays his

his addresses to *Zaphira*, but is received with all the rage of an indignant mother. Mossop supported the pride and ferocity of *Barbarossa* with great spirit; and Mrs. Cibber, giving full scope to that expressive and harmonious voice, spoke daggers in every sentence. It was the thunder and lightening of virtue; insomuch, that when the tyrant is left to himself, her behaviour extorts, even from a fierce Barbarian, the following fine reflection:

> ——————— There is a charm
> Of majesty in virtue, that disarms
> Reluctant pow'r, and bends the struggling will
> From her most firm resolve.

Selim, who is supposed to be dead, has an interview with *Othman*, but assumes the borrowed name of *Achmet*. In that disguise he is not known to the friend of the late royal family, who says, he should know the young prince

prince by a beauteous scar on his forehead, made by a furious pard, which *Selim* killed to save his mother from destruction. *Selim* says, a scar!—Ay, on his forehead: *Selim* lifts his turban, and asks *Othman*, "*What! like this?*" The faithful minister is transported with joy, and yet it is not a little surprizing that Dr. Browne should adopt such an expedient. He could not but know what Aristotle has said on the subject. That great critic saw the effect produced in the tragedies of his time by the sudden recognition of persons who love each other, but when they meet are absolute strangers; and he therefore, in his XVII. chapter, treats of the means that lead in the best and most probable manner to such unexpected discoveries. Scars, or marks on the body, are the first that come under his consideration. These, he observes, may be used

used with more or less art, as may be seen in the two discoveries of Ulysses in the XIX. and XXI. books of Homer's Odyssey. In the former, the nurse, *Euriclea*, being employed to wash Ulysses's feet, sees a scar on his foot, and knows him by that mark. The second discovery is made afterwards to the swineherds by Ulysses himself, who shews them the same token. The first, Aristotle says, is the best, as it is produced by mere chance. The last is pronounced to be neither ingenious, nor the cause of sudden surprise. In this Ulysses offers his own proofs, and the poet may make him say whatever his fancy suggests. The case is different with *Euriclea*: "It is an unexpected circumstance that brings the truth "to light." This criticism, so well founded in the nature of things, could not have escaped the notice of so eminent a scholar as Dr. Browne;

Browne; and yet of the two modes he chose, the worst.

In the fifth act, *Barbarossa* is determined that *Selim* shall be put to death. It is true, that he is saved from the tyrant's vengeance. But, at the second watch, the bell tolls for his execution. In this Dr. Johnson observed, "that there were two improprieties; in the "first place, the use of a bell is unknown to "the Mahometans; and secondly, Otway had "tolled a bell before Dr. Browne, and we are "not to be made April fools twice by the "same trick." The play was so greatly acted by Garrick, and the rest of the performers, that it kept possession of the stage for a number of nights. It has been frequently repeated since that time, and, indeed, is so diversified by various incidents, that it will always be a popular

popular tragedy; and, in the closet, by the energy of language, and the harmony of versification, will give great pleasure to the reader of taste.

In the month of February following, the public were treated with an opera called, the *Fairies*, taken from the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and written by Mr. Garrick; the musick by Mr. Smith, a pupil of the great Handel. The aerial beings, of which Shakespeare was the father, could not, it must be acknowledged, be rendered more fit for representation by any other contrivance.

A French war had broke out at this time; and to rouze the British spirit, Mr. Mallet prepared a *Masque*, intitled *Britannia*. The music was composed by Dr. Arne, and was a

great support of the piece. The Prologue was written by Garrick, and, as it was understood at the time, had some lines from the pen of Mr. Mallet. It was spoken by the manager, in the character of a *Drunken Sailor*. It was delivered with the greatest humour, and from the nature of the subject was so popular, that it was called for many nights after the *Masque* itself was laid aside, and Garrick was obliged, though he did not act in the play, to be in readiness to answer the public demand. The reader may, in like manner, expect it in this place.

PROLOGUE TO BRITANNIA.

Enter GARRICK, *fuddled; and talking to himself.*

WELL! if thou art, my boy, a little mellow,
A sailor half-seas o'er's a pretty fellow.

What

What cheer ho! *(looking round)* zounds! I carry
too much sail—
No—tight and trim—I scud before the gale.
[*Staggers forward, and stops.*
But softly tho'—the vessel seems to reel;
Steady, boy, steady—must not shew her keel.
And now, thus ballasted, what course to steer?
Shall I again to sea, and bang Mounseer?
Or shall I stay, and toy with Sal and Sue?
Do'st love 'em, boy?—by this right hand I do!
A well-rigg'd girl is surely most inviting;
There's nothing better—except flip and fighting.
I must not sculk; my country now commands:
Shall I turn in, when Honour pipes all hands?
What! shall we sons of beef and freedom stoop,
Or lower our flag to slavery and soup?
What! shall these parly-vous make such a racket,
And shall not we, my boys, well trim their jacket?
What! shall Old England be a Frenchman's butt?
No; when he shuffles, we should always cut.

I'll

I'll to 'em, faith—avast!—before I go,
Have I not promis'd Sal to see the show?
[*Pulls out a play-bill.*
From this same paper we shall understand
What work's to-night:—I read your printed hand.
First let's refresh a bit, for faith I need it;
I'll take one sugar-plumb *, and then I'll read it.
[*Reads the play-bill of* Zara, *which was acted that evening.*
At the The-a-tre Royal, Drury-Lane, will be
pre-sen-tated a Tragedy, called *Sarah.*
I'm glad 'tis *Sarah,* and a tragedy;
For Sal shall see her name-sake, and for me,
I'll sleep as sound as if I were at sea.
I'll skip the names—I would not give a pin—
Damn all their actors—except *Harlequin.*
[*Reads.*
To which will be-ad-ded a new Masque.
Zounds! why a masque? we sailors hate grimaces;
Above-board all! we scorn to hide our faces.

* Tobacco.

But

But what is here, so very large and plain?
Bri-tan-nia!—Ho! Britannia!—good again!
Huzza, boys!—by the Royal George I swear,
Tom Coxen, and the crew, shall all be there.
All free-born souls must take Britannia's part,
And give her three round cheers, with hand and heart.

[*Going off, he stops.*

I wish you landmen, tho', would leave your tricks,
Your factions, parties, and damn'd politics,
And, like us honest tars, drink, fight, and sing,
True to yourselves, your country, and your king.

It must not be omitted, that, in the course of this season, was revived Sir John Vanbrugh's Comedy of the *Mistake*, taken from *le Depit Amoureux* of Moliere. When it was ready to be presented before the public, Garrick deferred it to the month of March, with a generous design to give the first night

to Mrs. Pritchard for her benefit. From two such writers as Moliere and Vanbrugh, no wonder that we have a most excellent comedy. The scenes are carried on with abundant variety, presenting the most lively situations, all connected with dramatic skill. The quarrel between *Don Carlos* (Garrick) and *Leonora* (Mrs. Pritchard) is written in Vanbrugh's highest vein of humour, and was inimitably acted. The two lovers are resolved to part for ever, but their affections are too deeply planted in their hearts, and nature overcomes their capricious resolutions. The French critics tell us, that this amorous quarrel, and the reconciliation that takes place, is an imitation of the ninth Ode of Horace, lib. iii. which begins, *Donec gratus eram tibi*, and has been imitated by several English poets. If Moliere took his hint from that beautiful little poem,

he

he shewed his taste and his comic genius to great advantage. What follows sprung from his own fancy. The two servants, *Sancho* and *Jacinta*, saw the behaviour of their master and mistress, and scorn to follow their example. They enter into altercation; they express their mutual disdain; they exchange presents; she returning the thimble, the pin-cushion, the scissars, and even the garters, which she had received, while her lover gives her back a tobacco-stopper, a pen-knife, and other trinkets. All this is in imitation of *Carlos* and *Leonora*, and then, like them, they rush to one another's arms. Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard gave universal delight, and Woodward and Mrs. Clive convulsed the audience with fits of laughter. The play was often repeated during the remainder of the season, and has been since acted with great applause.

CHAP. XXIV.

The CHINESE FESTIVAL—*The Newspapers full of inflammatory Paragraphs—A Number of Dancers imported by* NOVERRE, *the Contriver of the Spectacle—The Public resolved to oppose the Dancers, because a French War had broke out—*GARRICK *obtains the King's Command, and hoped there would be no Riot in his Presence—Acts* RICHARD III.*—The King chiefly struck with the* LORD MAYOR*—A Violent Riot—The King withdrew—The Show not exhibited—Benches and Scenes demolished—The* CHINESE FESTIVAL *never performed—The Farce of the* APPRENTICE—FLORIZEL *and* PERDITA *from the* WINTER'S TALE*—The Tragedy of* ATHELSTAN, *by* Dr. BROWNE—*The Subject related in* HUME'S *History—The Play contains a strong Moral Lesson, fit to be duly considered by all Rebellious Spirits—Dr.* HILL *publishes a Petition from the Letters* I *and* U *to* DAVID GARRICK, Esq.—GARRICK'S *Epigram in Answer to the Doctor.*

September 1755, to June 1756.

AN unexpected storm gathered over Garrick's head in the beginning of this season. He had employed the summer in planning schemes for the enter-

entertainment of the town, and was resolved to spare no expence in preparing scenery and splendid decorations. For this purpose, he invited an artist, celebrated throughout Europe for his skill in all the graceful movements of dancing, and the art of presenting a regular story in dumb show. Such an exhibition would most probably have the attraction of novelty, and supersede the necessity of introducing those monstrous pantomimes, with which Mr. Lun hoped he could silence Shakespeare, Jonson, Otway, and Rowe. The person, whose dances were admired at every court on the Continent, was Monsieur Noverre, a native of Switzerland. Garrick entered into a most liberal engagement with him, and gave him a commission to enlist in his service the best performers he could find. Noverre arrived in London in the month of August, with

a band of no less than a hundred chosen for his purpose. He went to work immediately, and gave directions to carpenters, scene-painters, taylors, and, in the mean time, exercised his dancers for an exhibition, called, the *Chinese Festival*. The scriblers, the small wits, and the whole tribe of disappointed authors, declared war against the manager. In newspapers, essays, and paragraphs, they railed at an undertaking, calculated, as they said, to maintain a gang of Frenchmen. The spirit of the inferior class was rouzed, and spread like wildfire through London and Westminster. Garrick was alarmed, but still thought he could avert the impending storm. The king had never seen him act; this he stated to the Duke of Grafton, then Lord Chamberlain, and made it his request to have the honour of appearing before his majesty, when, according

ing

ing to custom, on the day of opening the session of parliament, he honoured the play-house with his presence. The favour was granted, and *Richard III.* was announced by command. This contrivance, Garrick flattered himself, would preserve peace and good order. His performance of *Richard,* and the Royal presence, he hoped, would procure a quiet reception for the *Chinese Festival.* He found himself mistaken. The play being finished, the dancers entered, and all was noise, tumult, and commotion. His majesty was amazed at the uproar, but, being told, that it was because people hated the French, he smiled, and withdrew from a scene of confusion. The affray continued without intermission above an hour. In the mean time, Mr. Fitzherbert, father of Lord St. Helen, and possessed of wit, humour, and politeness, almost beyond

any gentleman of that day, went into the Green Room, where the present writer happened to be. He had been, in consequence of an office, which he held, one of the attendants in the king's box. Garrick was impatient to know what his majesty thought of *Richard*. "I can say nothing on that head," replied Mr. Fitzherbert, but when an actor told *Richard*, "*The Mayor of London* "*comes to greet you*," the king rouzed himself, and when *Taswell* entered buffooning the character, the king exclaimed, "*Duke of* "*Grafton, I like that Lord Mayor*;" and, when the scene was over, he said again, "*Duke of Grafton, that is good Lord* "*Mayor*." Well! but the warlike bustle, the drums and trumpets, and the shouts of soldiers, must have awakened a great military genius. "I can say nothing of that," replied

Mr.

Mr. Fitzherbert; but when Richard was in Bosworth-field, roaring for a horse, his majesty said, "*Duke of Grafton, will that "Lord Mayor not come again?*"

After some time passed in merriment, Garrick's friends advised him to think no more of the *Chinese Festival*; but the experiment was repeated three or four nights more. The opposition went on with additional violence. Gentlemen of rank leaped out of the boxes to support the manager. Swords were drawn, but John Bull still hated Frenchmen, though the band imported by Noverre were Italians, Swiss, and Germans. At last the rioters resolved to end the contest; they tore up the benches, broke the lustres, threw down the partitions of the boxes, and, mounting the stage, demolished the Chinese scenery. The necessary

necessary repairs took five or six days, and, in the interval, public notice was given, that the proposed entertainment was laid aside for ever. The popular fury was appeased, and the business of the theatre went on without interruption.

In January 1756, the farce of the *Apprentice* made its appearance. It will be sufficient to say, that in all its parts it was greatly supported, and, if we add, that Woodward in the character of *Dick* was the life of the piece, it is a tribute due to the memory of that admirable comedian.

The following anecdote may, perhaps, amuse the reader. On the morning after the farce was acted, Mr. Garrick paid the author a visit, and brought with him the celebrated

Dr.

Dr. Munsey, whom this writer had never seen. Garrick entered the dining room, and turning suddenly round, ran to the door, and called out, "*Dr. Munsey, where are you "going?*"—"Up stairs to see the author," said Munsey.—"*Pho! pho! come down; the "author is here.*" Dr. Munsey came, and, as he entered the room, said, in his free way, "*You scoundrel! I was going up to the "garret: who could think of finding an "author on the first floor?*" After this introduction, the Doctor sat down, and was highly diverting for near an hour. He rose on a sudden, and, "*Well! Garrick,*" said he, "*I have had enough of this, and now I'll "go and see the tall woman at Charing "Cross.*" From that time the present writer was intimate with Dr. Munsey, and found him on all occasions a most pleasant companion.

Towards

TOWARDS the end of January came forth *Florizel and Perdita*, reduced by Garrick to three acts from Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*; the most irregular production of that great but eccentric poet. The rules of time and place are totally violated; the former includes more than sixteen years. The action begins before *Perdita* is born, and extends to her wedding day. As to place, the scene is sometimes in Sicily, and sometimes in Bohemia, which last is treated as if it were a maritime country. The business is so complicated, and heterogeneous, that the strictest attention can not find a clue to guide us through the maze. Notwithstanding this, there are detached beauties without number, and wild as many of the characters are, they are drawn with such a masterly pencil, that they seem to be acting in the ordinary business of real life. Garrick

saw

saw that the public would be little obliged to him for a revival of the entire play, and therefore, with great judgement, extracted from the chaos before him a clear and regular fable. The Prologue*, which he wrote and spoke upon the occasion, is in his usual vein of pleasantry; and the two last lines are expressive of his design:

'Tis my chief wish, my joy, my only plan,
To lose no drop of that immortal man.

The piece was well performed. Yates in *Autolicus*, and Woodward, in the *Clown*, gave great entertainment. It is unnecessary to add that Garrick, in *Leontes*, and Mrs. Pritchard, in *Hermione*, acquitted themselves with their usual ability. Mrs. Cibber ought not to be passed by in silence. In her hands *Perdita*

* See the Appendix, No. XI.

was

was the delight of the audience. She not only gave every grace to the innocent and blooming *Perdita*, but she sung in the sweetest strain. Her song, which begins, "*Come, "Come, my good shepherds, our flocks let "us shear*," was worthy of her, whose musical powers were admired by the great Handel, when he produced her in his Oratorio of the *Messiah*. "*The roses will bloom, when "there's peace in the breast*," was heard for a long time in every street of the metropolis.

After the run of this piece, the tragedy of *Athelstan*, by Dr. Browne, was announced about the end of February. The play is founded on a passage in an early period of the English history. The substance, as related by David Hume *, is as follows: In the reign of

* See Hume's History, 8vo. vol. i. p. 130.

Ethelred,

Ethelred, who was called by the epithet of the *unready*, the Danes made a descent on the eastern coast, but the English had collected at London a fleet capable of giving battle to the enemy, though that judicious measure failed of success, by the perfidy of Alfric, Duke of Mercia, who had suffered disappointments and disgrace at court, and fired with resentment, revolted to the Danes. He gave them secret intelligence of the danger their fleet was in, and deserted to them with a squadron under his command, and thereby disappointed all the efforts of his countrymen. With these slender materials Dr. Browne went to work, and from his own invention, contrived to raise a grand superstructure. He made use of the privilege allowed to the poet in all cases, where known historical truth is not contradicted, and the fictitious circumstances are, with proba-

bility, interwoven with the texture of the whole. Horace has given the rule:

> Atque ita mentitur, sic veris falsa remiscet,
> Primo ne medium, medio ne discrepet imum.

The name of Alfric, the rebel duke, is changed to that of *Athelstan*. The moral doctrine of the piece is of the first importance. It comes home to the breast of every Briton; it inculcates the essential rule of his civil conduct, in order to secure his liberty, his virtue, and his happiness. *Athelstan* soon falls into deep reflection; he sees his country reduced by his treason to the lowest misery, and is stung with remorse. He finds, unexpectedly, that *Thyra* (acted by Mrs. Cibber) is his daughter, and resolves, as becomes a father, to protect her from the brutal lust of *Gothmand*, the Danish general. The two chiefs have an interview. The

father claims his child: the invader says, she is his, by right of conquest; he calls *Athelstan* a traitor, and bids him go to his king, *Ethelred*, for a redress of his grievances. He treats the rebel duke with utter contempt, and then tells him,

> Ev'n such, thro' ev'ry age, shall be the lot
> Of British blindness, when it aids invasion,
> The slave of conquest first, and then her scorn!
> The scaffolding, on which ambition mounts,
> Then spurns it to the earth, a refuse vile,
> Fit for contempt to tread on!

This is the retribution *Athelstan* meets with for his crimes. His distresses go on encreasing, till, at length, in a dark grove, when he thinks he is killing *Gothmund*, he plunges his dagger in the breast of his daughter. *Thyra* is led forth ready to expire. The father sees that he has murdered his child, and

the daughter finds that she dies by the hand of a parent. The scene that follows is pathetic in the highest degree. *Thyra* in the tenderest manner forgives her father, and expires. *Athelstan* beholds his crimes with horror, and aims a dagger at his breast. The blow is prevented, but nothing can appease the scorpion stings of a guilty conscience. He calls himself a traitor and a murderer. His agony of mind is too much for a feeble old man, and, after a strain of lamentation, he dies of a broken heart.

Such is the catastrophe of a rebel. The play, since the first tide of success, has never been repeated, but surely it well deserves to hold its rank among the best of our English tragedies. The moral doctrine, which it teaches, ought to be impressed on every heart throughout

throughout his Majesty's dominions. The lines, with which Dr. Browne concludes his Prologue, are an excellent warning to every insurgent, who, at any time, shall be so mad and wicked as to think of aiding a French invasion.

Treason attend: Here view the rebel's fate,
Nor hope thy arm can shake a free-born state;
See blood and horror end what guilt began,
And tremble at thy woes in *Athelstan*.

About this time Garrick and Dr. Hill had another paper war, which, however, did not last long. The Doctor, fond of a skirmish, published, in a pamphlet, a Petition from the letters *I* and *U* to David Garrick Esq. both complaining of terrible grievances imposed upon them by the great actor, who frequently banished them from their proper stations; as in the

word *virtue*, which they said, he converted into *vurtue*; and, in the word, *ungrateful*, he displaced the *U*, and made it, *ingrateful*, to the great prejudice of the said letters. To this complaint Garrick replied in the following

EPIGRAM.

If 'tis true, as you say, that I've injur'd a letter,
I'll change my note soon, and I hope for the better:
May the right use of letters, as well as of men,
Hereafter be fix'd by the tongue and the pen;
Most devoutly I wish they may both have their due,
And that *I* may be never mistaken for *U*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

Comedy of RULE A WIFE AND HAVE A WIFE, *revived with Alterations*—GARRICK *in* LEON—MRS. PRITCHARD *in* ESTIFANIA—WOODWARD *the* COPPER CAPTAIN—CATHERINE AND PETRUCHIO, *in Three Acts*—WOODWARD *and* MRS. CLIVE—*Account of the Original Play—The Farce of* LILLIPUT, *by* GARRICK—*Observations on that Piece—The* TEMPEST *changed to an Opera—Critical Examen of that Play—Too good to be changed to an Opera*—SHIRLEY'S *Comedy of the* GAMESTERS *revived—Review of it*—GARRICK'S *excellent* PROLOGUE—*The Farce of* LETHE, *with the Additional Character of* LORD CHALKSTONE—*The Farce of the* MALE COQUETTE—*Review of it.*

September 1756 to June 1757.

FLETCHER's comedy of *Rule a Wife and Have a Wife*, with some alterations by Garrick, was brought forward early in this season. There is something whimsical in the plot, but, upon the whole, it is an excellent comedy. Garrick,

in *Leon,* displayed the wonderful quickness, with which he could, on a sudden, transform himself into different shapes. The assumed simplicity, by which he deceives *Margaritta,* was a truly comic and surprising contrast to the manly spirit that he afterwards exerts, to shew her that, in order to keep her his, he was determined to rule her. Woodward, in the *Copper Captain,* and Mrs. Pritchard, in *Estifania,* gave a just and lively imitation of nature; and in fact, the poet, who copied from life, gave them excellent materials. The play contains an admirable lesson for proper conduct in the married state, and when we say, that it is superior to all the trash of modern times, we pay no compliment to the author.

Catherine and Petruchio, from Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew,* altered by Garrick,

Garrick, was the piece next in succession. The redundancies of the original, and all the incoherent parts, are retrenched with great judgement, and we now have a regular and consistent fable in three acts. As it stands at present, we have the precious ore of the original, without any of the dross. *Grumio* was well performed by Yates. In the part of *Petruchio,* Woodward acquitted himself with that whimsical spirit, which always distinguished him; and Mrs. Clive, in her true vein of comic humour, crowned the whole with success. The original play is, perhaps, the worst of all our great poet's productions. It is supposed to be presented before some great lord in his palace, and, by consequence, loses all power of imposing on the minds of an audience. It cannot for a moment pass for reality. It is a wild, confused, and almost

inexplicable fable, crowded with superfluous scenes and unnecessary characters; forming all together a chaos of heterogeneous matter, a wilderness without a path to guide you through the labyrinth. Garrick, however, saw his way. He was like a man travelling over a rugged country, who, amidst the rocks and desert wastes that surround him, perceives great order and beauty in several parts. From the whole he had the judgement to select the most coherent scenes, and, without intermixing any thing of his own, to let Shakespeare be the entire author of a very excellent comedy.

When we reflect on the unwearied assiduity of a man, who acted four or five times in a week great and laborious characters, we cannot but wonder, that he should find leisure to produce, with such rapidity, so many new pieces

pieces of his own composition. He knew that variety is the ruling passion, the *primum mobile* of the public mind. Accordingly, he gave in the month of December 1756, the farce of *Lilliput*, founded on the first book of *Gulliver's Travels*. In that work Dr. Swift displays the most wonderful invention, at times as eccentric as Rabelais in his wildest flights, but always so governed by reason, that he could build on the most chimerical fiction a noble system of moral and political principles. He was the great master of irony, and his fund of satire, wit, and humour, was inexhaustible. His imaginary beings act in such a manner, that they almost deceive us into a belief that they are of the human species. They exhibit a picture of men and manners, not to be equalled by Lucian, and not surpassed by Cervantes. By introducing this fictitious race in a regular

a regular drama, Garrick saw that two important points might be attained. At the sight of such diminutive creatures, adopting the follies of real life, the fashionable world might learn to lower their pride, and the dignity of vice would be lost. At the same time, the public would enjoy their dear variety. The piece was acted by boys and girls, all tutored by the manager, and the parents of not less than a hundred were most liberally rewarded.

GARRICK's muse was far from being tired. In the beginning of January, 1757, Shakespeare's play of the *Tempest* was converted into an opera. In this an error of judgement must be acknowledged. The original is the most entertaining, and, in some respects, the most complete production, in the whole circle of the drama.

drama. The hint is taken from a translation of an Italian story; but Shakespeare's touch turned every thing to gold. As Dr. Johnson says, "*Existence saw him spurn her bounded "reign*;" he produced a new creation, and gave it the appearance of reality, by the consummate art, with which he contrived to interweave it with historical characters.

Prospero, Duke of Milan, was driven from his dominions by a conspiracy between *Alonzo*, King of Naples, and *Antonio*, brother of the *Duke*, whose ambition could not be appeased, till he usurped the crown, and committed *Prospero*, with his daughter, then an infant, in a shattered bark to the mercy of the winds and waves. *Prospero*, with his child, *Miranda*, is thrown on a desert island, and there finds *Caliban*, a solitary savage. About twelve years

years after this event, the King of Naples, with his brother *Sebastian*, *Ferdinand*, the *King's* son and heir, *Antonio*, the usurper, and *Gonzalo*, an honest minister at the Neapolitan court, were embarked at Tunis (since called Carthage) on their voyage to Italy, after having married a daughter of the King of Naples to the African Prince. *Prospero*, who is endowed with magic powers, raises a tremendous storm, by which the vessel is driven on his island. The passengers are all safely landed, but, by the force of enchantment, deprived of their understanding, and detained in that condition. Young *Ferdinand* escapes from the storm, and thinks the rest are all swallowed up by the waves. He meets *Miranda*, who had never seen a man, except her aged father. The scene between them is exquisitely beautiful. With the natural propensity

pensity of her sex, she is soon in love, and her father approves of her passion. To give diversity to the fable, *Caliban*, the savage, born of *Sycorax*, a sorceress, talks and acts in a manner, which we cannot but think is highly probable. The savage that was brought into this country from the woods of Hanover, in the reign of George II. served to shew, that our great poet's imagination was neither wild nor eccentric. *Trinculo*, the jester, and *Stephano*, the drunken butler, are fit company for *Caliban*. The scenes between them, without interrupting the main business, are natural and truly comic. *Ariel* is a præternatural agent, under the command of *Prospero*, who at length dissolves his magic art, and restores the adventurers to their senses. He marries *Miranda* to the heir apparent of Naples, and recovers the Duchy of Milan. In this manner,

ner, as Dr. Johnson observes, "*The operations "of magic, the tumults of a storm, the "adventures of a desert island, the native "effusions of untaught affection, the punish- "ment of guilt, and the final happiness of "the pair, for whom our passions and "reason are equally interested, combine to "form one of the finest dramas in the "world.*"

GARRICK ought not to have suffered such a play to dwindle into an opera. The harmony of the versification wanted no aid from music. He had said, in a former prologue, that, "*He wished to lose no drop of that "immortal man,*" and here he lost a *tun* of him. Had he revived the *Tempest*, as it stands in the original, and played the character of *Prospero*, he would have done justice

tice to the god of his idolatry, and honour to himself.

A good old comedy, called the *Gamesters*, succeeded to this fantastic opera. This was the production of James Shirley, a poet of the last century. *Wilding* is the principal character: a man addicted to play, with a rage that nothing can controul. He lives in a circle of gamblers, who are marked by their names, such as, *Careless, Little Stock, Sellaway*, and *Hazard*. They may all be said to represent numbers of the same stamp at every card and dice club in the metropolis at the present time. The plot is busy and intricate, but, in its progress, perfectly clear and probable. *Wilding's* wife is a woman of strict virtue; but her good qualities leave no impression on the mind of her husband. She forms a scheme for

for the reformation of the man she loves, and succeeds to her utmost wish. Gaming, so long ago as the year 1637, may be said to be in its infancy, but even then, Shirley considered it as the source of political and moral evil, and therefore drew his pen against so dangerous a vice. Garrick saw that destructive passion in the same light, and, to enforce the poet's doctrine, he introduced the subject in the following excellent

PROLOGUE.

WHENE'ER the wits of France take pen in hand,
To give a sketch of you, and this our land,
One settled maxim through the whole you see,
To wit—their great superiority!
Urge what you will, they still have this to say,
That you, who ape them, are less wise thad they.

'Tis

'Tis thus these well-bred letter-writers use us;
They trip o'er here, with half an eye peruse us,
Embrace us, eat our meat, and then abuse us.

When this same play was writ that's now before ye,
The English stage had reach'd it's point of glory!
No paltry thefts disgrac'd this author's pen,
He painted English manners, Englishmen,
And form'd his taste on Shakespeare and Old Ben.
Then were French plays and farces quite unknown,
Our wits wrote well, and all they writ their own.

These were the times, when no infatuation,
No vicious modes, no zeal for imitation,
Had chang'd, deform'd, and sunk the British nation.
Should you be ever from yourselves estrang'd,
The cock will crow, to see the lion chang'd!
To boast our liberty is weak and vain,
While tyrant-vices in our bosoms reign.

Not liberty alone a nation saves;
Corrupted freemen are the worst of slaves.
Let Prussia's sons each English breast inflame;
Oh! be our spirit, as our cause, the same.
And as our hearts with one religion glow,
Let us with all their ardour drive the foe,
As heav'n had rais'd our arm,—as heav'n had giv'n
the blow.

Would you rekindle all your ancient fires,
Extinguish first your modern vain desires.
Still it is yours, your glories to retrieve;
Lop but the branches, and the tree shall live.
With these erect a pile for sacrifice,
And in the midst—throw all your cards and dice;
Then fire the heap, and, as it sinks to earth,
The British genius shall have second birth;
Shall, Phœnix like, rise perfect from the flame,
Spring from the dust, and mount again to fame!

SUCH was the introduction of a most excellent and moral comedy. The advice, it is too true, has not been followed; on the contrary, the rage for play has gone on with encreasing violence. The comedy concludes with the language of a reformed gamester; but, as one of the company observes, "*The sinner preaches, but his lectures will make few penitents.*" Wilding says,

> The Syren's voice shall charm my ear no more;
> With joy I quit that treach'rous fatal shore,
> Where a friend's ruin is by friends enjoy'd,
> And ev'ry virtue is by turns destroy'd.

Thus we find that Garrick scorned to rummage the Continent of Europe for new fangled plays, and sooterkins of tragedy and comedy from Germany. He resorted to the old school, and was never at a loss for some novelty from his own pen. On Mrs. Pritchard's benefit-night,

he revived the farce of *Lethe*, with the additional character of *Lord Chalkstone*, performed by himself. Which had most merit, the actor or the writer, was a question that the best critics could not decide. The piece was repeated frequently, and has ever since made a firm stand on the stage.

THE farce of the *Male Coquette* is another of Garrick's productions, written and acted, as it was said at the time, within a month. He gave the first performance of it to Woodward for his benefit in the month of March, 1757. *Fribble* and *Captain Flash* had, before this time, exploded two miscreants that were a disgrace to society. A single instance of the effeminate character appeared some years since at a village in Surry, and having no appearance of either the masculine or feminine

minine gender, all who saw this motley being, agreed to give to such a phœnomenon the name of *The It.* That was the last of the puny race. *Daffodil,* the *Male Coquette,* has little or no resemblance to *Fribble.* He makes love to every woman he meets, and as soon as he flatters himself that he has insinuated himself into her good graces, drops her acquaintance, with the air of a gallant, who has triumphed over her virtue. The farce succeeded greatly, and owed much of its reputation to Woodward's admirable acting. The moral is expressed in the following lines:

Coquettry in the fair is loss of fame;
In the male sex takes a detested name,
That marks the want of manhood, virtue, sense, and shame.

CHAP. XXVI.

Mrs. CENTLIVRE's *Comedy of the* WONDER—*Review of that Play*—GARRICK *in* DON FELIX—DR. SMOLLET's *Farce, called the* REPRISAL, *or the* TARS OF OLD ENGLAND—*Account of the Piece*—GARRICK's *Letter to* Dr. SMOLLET, *about the Charge on the Author's Night*—AGIS, *a Tragedy, by* JOHN HOME—*The late* Mr. GRAY's *Opinion of it*—ISABELLA, *or the* FATAL MARRIAGE, *altered from* SOUTHERNE, *by* GARRICK—SOUTHERNE's *Reflections on Tragi-comedy*—*The same Play revived with great Success by* Mrs. SIDDONS—*The Farce of the* UPHOLSTERER: GARRICK *in* PAMPHLET; WOODWARD *in the* BARBER; Mrs. CLIVE *in the Part of* SLIPSLOP.

September 1757 to June 1758.

THE Wonder, or a Woman Keeps a Secret, was revived in the beginning of November. This is the best comedy in the whole collection of Mrs.

Mrs. Centlivre. The subject is shortly this: *Don Pedro* is the father of *Violante*, and, that he may convert her fortune to his own use, is resolved to place her in a convent. But the lady has no nun's flesh: she is in love with *Don Felix*, a young nobleman of honour and integrity, but of a jealous temper. His sister, *Isabella*, is destined by her father, *Don Lopez*, to be the wife of *Don Guzman*, to whom she has a fixed aversion. To avoid being forced into such a marriage, she escapes from her father's house, and takes shelter under the care of *Violante*, who promises to give her a safe retreat, and conceal her from all enquiry. This is the grand secret, which we are to wonder to find kept by a woman. From that point of honour spring all the embarassments that follow. *Violante* acts with inviolable truth and constancy: she hides

Isabella in a closet, and when *Don Felix* wants the same retreat, she will not suffer him to enter. This awakens all his suspicions, to such a degree, that he resolves to take his final leave of *Violante*. Their interview affords a most admirable scene, in which Garrick almost excelled himself. But the falling out of lovers is a renewal of their passion. They are thoroughly reconciled, till another incident inflames the jealousy of *Don Felix*. Every thing, however, is explained to his satisfaction; *Isabella* marries *Colonel Britton*; *Don Felix* sees his error; and, after promising to renounce the infirmities of his temper, is received with tender affection by *Violante*.

THESE circumstances are the ground-work of the play. The fable is carried on with great

great dramatic skill; frequent difficulties occur; expectation is kept alive; a most entertaining, a clear, and intelligible perplexity, runs through the whole, till at last it ends in a pleasing catastrophe. Garrick made a few alterations with his usual judgement, and, by his performance of *Don Felix*, did great honour to Mrs. Centlivre and himself.

THE celebrated Dr. Smollet was the next candidate for theatrical fame. A farce, written by him, called the *Reprisal*, or, *The Tars of Old England*, issued forth in the month of December. In this piece we have four leading characters, a *Bonny Scot*, a *Teague*, a *Frenchman*, and an *English Sailor*. The last was performed by Woodward, who was made by the author to lie down, and whimper and cry, in a manner that gave

gave no adequate idea of a British tar. The jargon of the *Frenchman*, and the provincial dialect of the *Scotchman* and *Irishman*, had been so hackneyed on the stage, that they gave little or no entertainment. The piece, however, met with tolerable success, and the author reaped the profits of a very large benefit. He had, before this time, declared open war against Garrick in *Roderick Random* and *Peregrine Pickle*; but the civilities, which he met with upon this occasion, extinguished all former animosities, and a thorough reconciliation followed. The letter, which Garrick wrote to him, serves to shew in what a liberal manner authors were charged on their benefit-nights, and, for that purpose, may be seen in the Appendix *. To what we have said of *The Tars of Old England*, we

* See Appendix No. XII.

cannot

cannot abstain from adding, that Dr. Smollet, though, like Fielding, he shewed great humour in his novels, was like that great author, no master of theatrical effect. The drama was not his province.

A CIRCUMSTANCE somewhat singular happened in the course of the season. Garrick had rejected, in 1757, the tragedy of *Douglas*, by John Home, by much the best of that gentleman's dramatic works. The reasons that operated on the manager never transpired. He saw, no doubt, and felt that most beautiful and tender interview in the third act, between *Lady Randolph* and the *Old Shepherd*; but, perhaps, after that scene, the fable seemed to languish, without any striking or pathetic situation. Besides this, it is probable, that Garrick did not think the part of

Young

Young Norval adequate to his superior powers. Be the fact as it may, the tragedy of *Douglas* deserved a better fate. At length, as if the manager had brought down a judgement on himself, he was obliged, under the pressure of great influence, to receive from the same author, a play in no respect comparable to that which he had proscribed. This was the tragedy of *Agis*, acted in January, 1758. The Spartan History furnished the ground-plot, but the superstructure has nothing of the Grecian order, nor indeed the taste of a good modern architect. The scenes follow one another in a regular train, but without animation. To atone for that defect, the author introduced a grand and splendid procession in the second act, and, by that pompous show, and the addition of sonorous music, hoped to supply the place of terror and pity. A strong party

party was formed in the fashionable world in favour of the play, and during a run of ten or eleven nights, the boxes displayed great brilliancy, while the rest of the house, feeling no emotion in their hearts, looked on in sedate and dull composure. *Agis* is killed behind the scenes; and, to supply the want of pathos, his body is brought forward in a second procession, with a solemn funeral dirge. Mr. Gray, in one of his Letters, published by Mr. Mason, says of this piece, "*I cry to* "*think that it should be by the author of* "Douglas: *why, it is all modern Greek;* "*the story is an Antique Statue, painted* "*white and red, frizzed and dressed in a* "*negligee made by a Yorkshire mantua-* "*maker.*" After this sentence, pronounced by a man of candour and acknowledged judgement,

judgement, a minute examination of the play were a waste of criticism.

To make some amends to the public after so cold and dull a performance, Garrick had recourse to Southerne, a poet, whose tragic genius was equal, if not superior, to Otway. Unfortunately tragi-comedy had been, from an early period, the fashion of the times. In this motley mixture, Southerne excelled all other writers. He knew that the men, who love to enjoy a hearty laugh, are ready, on the appearance of Virtue in distress, to dissolve in tears. Sympathy on such occasions is a delighful sensation. As Mr. Pope observes,

> The broadest mirth unfeeling Folly wears,
> Less pleasing far than Virtue's very tears.

To

To give this two-fold pleasure was the ambition of Southerne; but his comic scenes were too episodial, and not sufficiently blended with the main business. Besides this, the dialogue of the under-characters sometimes borders on the gross and vulgar, and is, therefore, of an ill mingle with the serious and interesting part of the fable. This is the case in the play, called *The Fatal Marriage*, or, *The Innocent Adultery*. Southerne's own words will place this matter in the clearest light. He says in his dedication of the play, "I took the hint of the tragical part from a "Novel of Mrs. Behn's, called the *Fair Vow-* "*breaker*, and borrowed from her the ques- "tion, how far such a distress was to be "carried, upon the misfortune of a woman's "having innocently two husbands at the same "time? I have given you a little taste of "comedy

" comedy with it, not from my own opinion,
" but the present humour of the town; be-
" cause I think every reasonable man will,
" and ought to govern, in the pleasures he
" pays for. I had no occasion for the comedy,
" but in the three first acts, which Mrs. Brace-
" girdle particularly diverted, by the beauty
" and gaiety of her action; and though I was
" fond of coming to the serious part, I should
" have been very well pleased (if it had been
" possible to have woven her into that in-
" terest), to have had her company to the
" end of my journey."

THE absurdity of those unconnected plots, which present a comic and a tragic action, independent of each other, in the same play, is set forth by Southerne himself with remarkable candour. But was it fit that so pathetic a tragedy

a tragedy should be consigned to oblivion? Garrick judged otherwise: he discarded the superfluous comic characters, and did not wish to have the company of *Victoria*, which was acted by Mrs. Bracegirdle, to the end of his journey. The story, as it now stands, under the title of *Isabella*, or, the *Fatal Marriage*, is one action, conducted with regularity, and ending in a catastrophe, that pierces to the inmost feelings of the heart. *Isabella* believes that her husband, *Biron*, was killed at the seige of Candy: she remained for seven years after that supposed event in the deepest affliction, yet rearing her infant child with the tenderest care. *Biron's* father, *Count Baldwin*, treats her with unrelenting cruelty; and *Carlos*, his second son, is her inveterate enemy, under a mask of friendship. By his

contrivance, she is at last induced to marry *Villeroy*, a man of honour, who thinks her a widow, and offers to relieve her from the utmost distress. She consents to the match, saying, at the same time, that "*She will* "*yield her hand, but has no heart to give,* "*as her first husband carried that with him* "*to his grave.*" *Biron* arrives on the following day. He has a meeting with *Isabella*, and discovers himself to her, in a transport of joy. But her distress now rises to a crisis: she now has two husbands, and accuses herself of infidelity to her first marriage-vow. The villainy of *Carlos*, who knew that his brother was alive, is brought to light, and he is known to be the cause of a fatal marriage. In a fray with that unnatural brother, *Biron* receives a wound, and of that, or a broken heart,

heart, expires at *Isabella's* feet. She loses her senses, and, in that distracted state, ends her life with a poinard.

SUCH a tragedy, supported by Garrick and Mrs. Cibber, could not fail of commanding the attention of the public. It lay dormant, after their time, for some years, but was at length revived in all its former lustre by Mrs. Siddons, who came upon mankind in the character of *Isabella*, and astonished even those who remembered Mrs. Cibber.

THE farce of the *Upholsterer* was acted in the course of this season. The manager consented that the author should give the first representation to Mr. Mossop, for his benefit, in the month of March. When the author

says, that it met with great success, he is sure that the reader will not accuse him of vanity, when he adds, that Garrick in *Pamphlet*, Woodward in the *Barber*, Yates in *Quidnunc*, and Mrs. Clive in *Slipslop*, were sufficient to give celebrity to the piece. A farce, so completely acted, was never seen before or since.

CHAP. XXVII.

GARRICK *in* MARPLOT *in the* BUSY BODY—*The* ROUT, *a Farce by* Dr. HILL—*It was damned the first Night—Acted a second Time for the* DOCTOR'S *Benefit—*HILL'S *Ingratitude—*GARRICK'S *Epigram—*MALLET *brings out* EURYDICE, *his first Tragedy, with Alterations—It died in a few Nights—The* ORPHAN OF CHINA—*Differences between* GARRICK *and the Author—The Question between them referred to* WILLIAM WHITEHEAD, Esq.—*That Gentleman's polite Behaviour—His Decision in Favour of the Play—*GARRICK'S *fine Performance of the Part of* ZAMTI—Mrs. YATES *in* MANDANE—*Anecdote about* Mr. FOOTE.

September 1758, to June 1759

DRURY-LANE, at this time, suffered a considerable loss. Woodward, in the preceding summer, demanded an addition to his salary, with an express condition, that for the future, he

should be on equal terms with the highest performer in the company. This was thought unreasonable by the managers, and they refused to comply. While the negotiation was depending, Foote asked Woodward whether he had gained his point, and, being answered in the negative, "That is strange," said he; "You play in almost all the comedies, and "harlequin besides: why then, in my opinion, "you are intitled to the money, whether you "go by the hour or the ground!" Garrick, however, thought otherwise, and Woodward went, upon an invitation, to be joint-manager with Barry in Dublin.

GARRICK was always fertile in expedients. He knew that *Marplot*, in the *Busy Body*, was the character, in which Woodward shone to great advantage. He, therefore, resolved, with

with something like a spirit of revenge, to play that part himself, having no doubt but he should eclipse Woodward entirely. But he was mistaken: the deserter to Dublin could put on such a vacant innocent countenance, that all the mischief he did by being busy in other people's affairs, appeared to be the effect of accident; whereas Garrick had so much meaning, such strong intelligence in his countenance, that he seemed to do every thing by design. It may, therefore, be fairly said, that, in this attempt he failed, for the first time.

In December, the famous Dr. Hill had the ambition to be a dramatic writer. He had finished a farce, called the *Rout*, and, in order to insure success, presented it as the work of *a person of quality*, to be acted for the benefit

of the *Marine Society*, The piece was accordingly brought on the stage, and, being for a charity, was endured with a remarkable degree of patience. In a few days after, Dr. Hill threw off the mask; the man of quality dwindled down into a mercenary scribbler, who avowed himself the author of a wretched farce, and demanded a benefit night. Garrick, as Pope has it, "*Foe to his pride, but friend to his distress,*" complied with a very extraordinary demand. For this civility, some return of gratitude might have been expected; but because the farce was damned, the discontented author filled the newspapers with envenomed paragraphs against the manager. As soon as he had aimed all the shafts in his quiver, Garrick replied in the two following lines:

EPIGRAM

EPIGRAM ON DR. HILL.

For *Farces* and *Physic* his equal there scarce is;
His *Farces* are *Physic*, his *Physic* a *Farce* is.

With this finishing blow the paper war concluded. Dr. Hill never returned to the charge.

MR. MALLET at this time, thought proper to revive his first tragedy, intitled *Eurydice*, which he had brought on the stage in 1731. He made what he deemed amendments, and as Garrick and Mrs. Cibber undertook the principal characters, he had no doubt but he should acquire both fame and profit. The play was acted about the end of January 1759, but met with as cold a reception in it's altered state, as it did on its first appearance. All that Dr. Johnson

Johnson says of it, is, "That he heard it men-
"tioned as a mean performance." It loitered on the stage nine nights, and sunk into oblivion. As it does not seem likely to see the light again, a critical examination of it is unnecessary. Peace be to its *manes*.

In the month of April following, the tragedy of the *Orphan of China* gained admittance to the boards of Drury-Lane stage. Of the play itself, the author, as becomes him, chuses to remain in strict silence; but as it encountered a number of difficulties, it will not be improper to state the particulars, especially as a very lame and imperfect account has been published by different writers, who do not seem to have had authentic information. As this was the first, and, indeed, the last, disagreeable controversy, this writer ever had with Mr. Garrick,

it

it is with reluctance that he now recalls it to his memory, but he thinks that the truth, and nothing but the truth, should be laid before the public. The account shall be condensed into as narrow a compass as possible.

At the close of the season, 1758, the author tendered his play to Mr. Garrick, who, in a few days, returned it as totally unfit for the stage. A young author could not easily submit to what he thought an act of injustice. Perhaps he swelled with too much pride. When he looks back to his own conduct on the occasion, he is willing to pass a censure on himself; but, being encouraged by two friends, on whose judgement and integrity he had great reliance, he began a paper-war. He knew that anxiety for his fame was the manager's reigning foible; on the slightest attack, he was *tremblingly alive*

all

all o'er. This writer took advantage of that failing, and opened a fierce campaign. Garrick made his complaint at Holland house. Mr. Fox, in consequence of it, sent for this writer, and desired to know why so much animosity to the great actor of the age? the answer was, without reserve, because it was the only way to obtain redress. "But," said Mr. Fox, "After the *Apprentice*, and the *Upholsterer*, "I have no notion of your being able to write "a tragedy. I always give credit to a man, "whom I know to be a great master of his art, "and am, therefore, afraid that Garrick is in "the right." He desired that the tragedy might be sent to him: this was accordingly done, and in a few days he informed the author, that he and Mr. Horace Walpole read it together, and were both of opinion, that it was improperly rejected. Mr. Fox, at the same time said,

said, "That Garrick was to dine at Holland "house on the Sunday following, and desired "the author to call on him the next day." At that meeting, the first word from Mr. Fox was, "Have you heard from Garrick?"—"No, "Sir:"—"You will hear from him," said Mr. Fox: "After dinner yesterday, Mr. Wal- "pole and I repeated, at different times, some "lines that had struck us:" Garrick stared with an air of surprise, and at last said, "I "perceive that you two gentlemen have been "reading what I have read." "Yes, Mr. "Garrick," replied Mr. Fox, "We have been "reading, and admiring, what, we are sure "you admire." Not a word more passed on the occasion, but in a day or two after, Garrick, by letter, desired to see the *Orphan of China* once more, as, in his hurry, he might have passed an erroneous judgement. The play

was

was sent to him; and in a week Garrick returned it, in a very polite stile, retracting his former sentence, and promising to act it early in the following year. All difficulties seemed now to be removed, but in the month of October broke out again with redoubled fury. This will surprize the reader, but it is easy to account for it. It was Garrick's misfortune to be too accessible to a set of invidious tale-bearers. As I have said of him elsewhere, he lived in a *whispering gallery*. What he heard, he believed, and acted accordingly, with deep resentment. Some story had been told him respecting the present writer, and, in consequence of it, he resolved to renew the quarrel. He sent for the play, and in a short time returned it, with a peremptory declaration, that he recurred to his former judgement, and thought the tragedy inadmissible. The author took

took fire at this second repulse, and signified to Mr. Garrick, that, being in possession of a positive promise, he would not be trampled upon by any man whatever. The consequence was, a proposal to discuss the matter at an amicable meeting, at the house of Vaillant the bookseller. Garrick brought with him his partner Mr. Lacy, and Mr. Berenger, a gentleman well known for his taste and polished manners. The author went alone: much altercation ensued, but the result was, an agreement to refer the play to Mr. William Whitehead, who happened to be at Bath. A joint letter was sent to him, requesting him to say, whether the manager ought to act the *Orphan of China*, and whether he thought the public would approve of it. Mr. Whitehead's answer was, that he would not meddle with those two points, but, if his saying, whether he himself liked

liked the play, or disliked it, would end all differences, he would be ready to speak his mind. The distressed *Orphan* went to Bath, as the author said in his letter, for the recovery of his health. In less than a week, Mr. Whitehead wrote to both parties, and was pleased to say, that he would go beyond his commission, and explicitly pronounce, that he not only approved of the play, but thought the manager ought to act it, and he believed the public would like it. By this decision peace was restored. Mr. Whitehead did not stop there: As soon as he came to town, he was so polite as to visit the author at his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, and signified his intention to be present in the green-room at the reading of the play. He was as good as his word. Garrick read to the actors, who were to be employed, with that wonderful power, of which he was a com-

a complete master, changing his countenance and the tone of his voice, as the sentiment or passion varied. He proposed, as he went on, a number of alterations: Mr. Whitehead, with great politeness, over-ruled all objections; and, when Garrick in the fifth act paused to offer a considerable change, Mr. Whitehead answered in terms so elegant, that they have been from that time engraved on my memory. His words were, "Mr. "Garrick, there are so many beauties in this "play, that, for the sake of us, who may "hereafter write for the stage, I beg we may "have no more." In this manner Mr. Whitehead was the author's patron, and afterwards favoured him with an elegant prologue. I have been drawn into a long, and, I fear, a tedious detail, but, as there has been published

a very imperfect account, I thought proper to state the real facts, and I was glad of an opportunity to pay a tribute of gratitude to the memory of Mr. Whitehead.

The *Orphan of China*, in this manner, surmounted every obstacle. The manager prepared a magnificent set of Chinese scenes, and the most becoming dresses. The performance stamped a value on the play. Mossop, in the *Young Prince*, and Holland, in the part of *Hamet*, acquired great reputation. Garrick in *Zamti* was a reverend *Mandarine*, and, in the various conflict of the passions, displayed such inimitable powers, that it may be truly said, he never appeared in any character (if we except *King Lear*) with such a brilliant lustre.

THE part of *Mandane* fell to the lot of Mrs. Yates. It was at first assigned to Mrs. Cibber, but her state of health was so precarious, that, at the author's request, Mrs. Yates studied the part during an entire month with the greatest assiduity. Mrs. Cibber at length gave notice that her state of health would not allow her to undertake so laborious a part. A rehearsal was appointed for Mrs. Yates: her exertions were such, that she astonished all the performers; insomuch, that Garrick took the author aside, and in a whisper told him, "This is the best thing that could happen; "Mrs. Cibbers' acting would be no novelty, "but Mrs. Yates will excite the general ad- "miration." It turned out as he foresaw; and with such advantages, no wonder that the play was admired in the representation.

THE author is sensible that he has run into too much prolixity about things chiefly relating to himself; but the following anecdote will, perhaps, make some amends for the digression. Mr. Fitzherbert, whose name must always be mentioned with honour, on the day when the *Orphan of China* was to be presented to the public, engaged a few friends to dine at the Rose tavern near Drury-Lane playhouse. The party consisted of Mr. Melmouth, Sir Francis Delaval, Mr. Berenger, Mr. Hogarth, and the famous Mr. Foote. The author, who was in some alarm, and wished to hide himself, was obliged to attend. In the middle of dinner, he received a letter from Mrs Cibber, regretting that her name was not in the play-bill, as she found herself in great spirits; but as it was then too late to make any alteration, she desired to have a line as

soon

soon as the play was over, and, in the mean time, she said, "*I shall offer up my prayers* "*for your success.*" Foote read the letter aloud, and returned it, saying with great gravity, Mrs. Cibber is a catholic, *and they always pray for the dead.* The company laughed heartily, and the author looked *with a foolish face of praise.*

It must not be omitted that Foote, who loved his friends, though he would never lose his joke, came at the end of the play to congratulate with the author; he ran to embrace him, but a gush of tears choaked his utterance, and he sat down unable, for a short time, to utter a word.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Mr. KING *engaged at Drury-Lane—The Farce of* HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS—*Hint of that Piece—*MACKLIN'S *Farce of* LOVE-A-LA-MODE—*The* GUARDIAN, *by* GARRICK—*Acted on the First Night for the Benefit of* CHRISTOPHER SMART, *a Man of Genius in Distress—*HARLEQUIN'S INVASION, *a Pantomime—The* WAY TO KEEP HIM, *in Three Acts, and the* DESERT ISLAND, *both produced on the same Night—*GARRICK'S *Prologue, in the Character of a* DRUNKEN POET—*The* SIEGE OF AQUILEIA, *a Tragedy, by* JOHN HOME, *a short lived Play—*OROONOKO *of* SOUTHERNE, *reduced to Three Acts by* Dr. HAWKSWORTH—*Criticism on the Doctor's lame Performance.*

September 1759 to June 1760.

DRURY-LANE received a new recruit, and an excellent one, in the person of Mr. King. This gentleman, we find, acted the part of *Valerius,*

rius, in the *Roman Father*, 1750. He did not think tragedy was his proper walk, but he could not obtain any other employment. At his request Garrick cancelled all agreements, and advised him to make himself a practised comedian in Dublin. From that place he was this year invited to Drury-Lane, and has continued there ever since, encreasing constantly in talents and reputation, even to the present day.

EARLY in October, Garrick brought forward that excellent farce, called *High Life below Stairs*. For some private reasons he wished to lie concealed, and, with that design, prevailed on his friend, Mr. Townly, master of Merchant Taylor's School, to suffer his name to be circulated in whispers. The truth, however, was not long suppressed. The subject of the

piece has an excellent moral tendency. The hint was, most probably, taken from the Spectator, No. 88, where we find the following passage. "Falling in the other day at a "victualling house near the House of Peers, "I heard the maid come down, and tell the "landlady at the bar, that my Lord Bishop "swore he would throw her out at window, "if she did not bring up more mild beer; "and my Lord Duke would have a double "mug of purl. On a sudden one came run-"ning down, and cried the house is rising; "down came all the company together: the "alehouse was filled with clamour, and "scoring a mug to the Marquis of such a "place; oil and vinegar to an Earl; and three "quarts to my New Lord for wetting his "title." From this sketch has sprung up in *High Life below Stairs*, a most admirable dramatic

dramatic satire on the vanity of servants, and the manners of the fashionable world, which are rendered completely ridiculous, when they descend from the parlour to the kitchen.

To this piece succeeded Macklin's farce of *Love-a-la-Mode.* It was admirably well performed; Macklin himself in *Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm,* Moody in the *Irishman,* and King in *Squire Groom,* were the life of the piece, which at first encountered some opposition, but, in the end, crowned the author with applause.

About this time, Mr. Christopher Smart, a classical scholar from the University of Cambridge, and a real genius, was reduced to a state of indigence. Among his various compositions was a poem, called, The Hilliad, of which

which Dr. Hill was the hero, and was emphatically called,

Th' insolvent Tenant of encumber'd Space.

Garrick felt for the wretched condition of a man, whose talents he respected. He resolved to give a play for his benefit, and, to ensure success, put, with the utmost dispatch, the last hand to an unfinished piece, entitled *The Guardian*. He produced it in the beginning of December, and raised a considerable sum for poor Kitt Smart. The hint was taken from *La Pupile*, by Monsieur Fagan, the author of several beautiful pieces. Garrick, however, formed a new fable, in which the secret of *Harriet*, a blooming young heiress, being in love with her guardian, is with great art concealed for a long time. New conjectures,

tures, new doubts, and new discoveries, rise in quick succession, and the audience is kept in suspense and eager expectation; till, at last, to clear up all mistakes, *Harriet* chuses to make the discovery, *The Guardian* (which was played by Garrick) accepts her hand, on making a solemn promise, that

> His friendly care shall change to grateful love,
> And the fond husband still the Guardian prove.

At Christmas the holiday folks were entertained with a pantomine, under the title of *Harlequin's Invasion*; that is, his invasion of Parnassus, and the territory of Shakespeare. Contrary to custom, the several personages have the use of their tongues. The dialogue was written by Garrick, and the plot and machinery were of his invention. Mr. Lun had the

the mortification of being told, that *Harlequin* and his fantastic train, were conquered in the end, and Shakespeare triumphed over the Smithfield groupe.

In the month of January, *The Way to keep Him*, a comedy in three acts, and *The Desert Island*, a dramatic poem, of the same length, were both acted on the same night. The last mentioned piece was strongly supported by Mrs. Pritchard, and her daughter. In the comedy, Garrick performed *Lovemore*, and introduced the whole by an excellent prologue *, in the character of a drunken poet.

Mr. John Home had now his third tragedy on the stocks, namely, *The Siege of Aquileia*,

* See the Appendix, No. XIII.

a city

a city not far from Rome, formerly rich and flourishing, and famous in history. It was besieged and taken by Attila in the year 452. In the play before us it is invested by Maximin, who is not one of the dramatis personæ. The author has been charged with a total deviation from the truth of history, and it is asserted by good judges, that the incidents bear a palpable resemblance to the *Siege of Berwick*. Be that as it may, the author still falls short of himself, that is to say, in this piece, as in *Agis*, he is inferior to his first production. The catastrophe is soon foreseen, and to that the fable proceeds in one uniform tenour, undisturbed by any sudden alarm, or vehemence of passion. Mr. Home, in his epilogue, seems to have had a right idea of dramatic poetry: He tells us in the following lines,

'Tis

'Tis nature only frames the Poet's heart:
Still as he thinks the scene, he feels along;
And from his bosom bursts the raptur'd song.
This is the sacred oracle, the shrine,
The bard consults, and there the tuneful nine!
With the same fire the hero's soul must glow,
Else vain to him the tale of tragic woe.

I am sorry to say, that in the play, we look in vain for such a poet as he has described; and it is with reluctance I add, that the two last lines give a just account of the *Siege of Aquileia.*

THE work of a true genius was brought on early in the month of March. This was the *Oroonoko* of Southerne, with alterations by Dr. Hawksworth, or rather omissions, by that gentleman, for in fact he has done little more. He has expunged the low comedy, which, without any connection, was intermixed, and

of

of course interrupted the current of the fable. The *Widow Lackit*, with her son *Daniel*, and *Charlotte Weldon*, are turned adrift. *Oroonoko* and *Imoinda*, are no longer surrounded by an idle crowd; they proceed without impertinent interruptions, and display their characters; his the most heroic, and her's the most amiable, that ever entered the imagination of a poet. Their mutual loves are in a strain so tender and affecting, that every heart is touched to the quick. I should be much obliged to any gentleman that would point out in any play, ancient or modern, a passage equal to the following lines:

——— Oh! where shall I strike?
Is there a smallest grain of that lov'd body,
That is not dearer to me than my eyes,
My bosomed heart, and all the life-blood there?
Bid me cut off these limbs, hew off these hands,
Dig out these eyes,—tho' I would keep them last
To gaze on thee.

The

The tragedy is now reduced to three acts, and has gained nothing by amputation. It can not be said to resemble the oak-tree in Horace, that gained new life and vigour from the pruning knife.

Per dama, per cædes ab ipso
Ducit opes animumque ferro.

It has been observed by a sensible writer, that, "Though Doctor Hawksworth has greatly "amended the play in point of omission, yet "the litttle further extent that he has given "to the characters of *Aboan* and *Hotman*, "seems not sufficient to fill up the hiatus, "which those omissions have occasioned. I "cannot, therefore, help thinking it still to "be wished, that some writer of ability would "consider it worth his while, to revive this "admirable ground-work of a tragedy, and

"by

" by interweaving with its present texture,
" such additional incidents as Mrs. Behn's ex-
" tensive novel might very amply furnish,
" render the whole highly interesting, and the
" piece entitled to that immortality, which its
" merit deserves. This would be paying a
" grateful tribute to the memory of an author,
" whose value seems likely to sink almost into
" oblivion, for want of some such care."

CHAP. XXIX.

The Farce of POLLY HONEYCOMBE, *the first Dramatic Production of* GEORGE COLMAN—*The* WAY TO KEEP HIM, *a Comedy, enlarged to Five Acts—The* JEALOUS WIFE, *a Comedy, by* Mr. COLMAN—*Its great Success*—SHAKESPEARE'S *Play of* CYMBELINE, *with considerable Alterations by* GARRICK—JOHNSON'S *Criticism on that Play*—ALL IN THE WRONG, *a Comedy*—*The* CITIZEN, *a Farce*—*The* OLD MAID—SHERIDAN *engaged at Drury-lane*—*Produces the* EARL OF ESSEX, *a Tragedy, by* Mr. BROOKE, *the Author of* GUSTAVUS VASSA—*Pleasant Observation of* Dr. JOHNSON, *another of* SAMUEL FOOTE—*The Tragedy of* KING JOHN—GARRICK *in the* BASTARD—SHERIDAN KING JOHN—Mrs. CIBBER'S *great excellence in the part of* LADY CONSTANCE—*Quarrel between* SHERIDAN *and* GARRICK—WHITEHEAD'S *Comedy of the* SCHOOL FOR LOVERS—Dr. HAWKSWORTH'S *Farce of* EDGAR *and* EMMELINE—*The* FARMERS RETURN TO LONDON *by* GARRICK—*Produced for* Mrs. PRITCHARD'S *Benefit.*

September. 1760 to June 1761.

ABOUT the middle of November, Mr. Colman, who had written the *Connoiseur* in conjunction with Doctor Thornton, launched his first dramatic

matic production. This was the farce of *Polly Honeycombe*; a piece designed to ridicule the follies of a young girl, whose imagination was bewildered by romances and novels from circulating libraries. The prologue was spoken by Mr. King, on whom the office of ambassador on such occasions devolved from that time, and continued long in his department. The farce was well received, and Miss Pope, in the part of *Polly Honeycombe*, gained great applause.

In January 1761, the comedy of *The Way to keep Him*, enlarged, according to the author's original plan, to five acts, appeared again on the boards of Drury-lane. *Lovemore*, with considerable additions, was finely performed by Garrick; and the part of *Sir Bashful Constant*, a new character inter-

woven with the plot, received every advantage of stage effect from the excellent acting of Mr. Yates.

In the beginning of February, Mr. Colman, who had lately fleshed his maiden sword in the farce of *Polly Honeycombe*, came forward flushed with success, and produced a comedy in five acts, entitled *The Jealous Wife*. I am not willing to enter into a criticism on this play, as, at that time, a quarrel broke out between the author and myself, and the breach was never healed. Mr. Colman had entered into a league with Churchill and Bob Lloyd, and that triumvirate, he thought, would be able to bear down all before them. Some certain artifices in Colman's conduct came to this author's knowledge, and, as they appeared to him in a bad light, he never listened to any terms

terms of a reconciliation; he saw evident symptoms of a bad heart, and with such a man he thought a state of war much better than a bad peace. At this distance of time, he does not harbour any thing like resentment. All he will say of *The Jealous Wife* is, that there was between Garrick and Mrs. Pritchard a scene most happily imagined. They were seated on a sopha, each jealous of the other, and both endeavouring, in short artful sentences, to hide their private views, and warp with cunning into one another's secrets. A more just imitation of nature was never seen. The play met with great applause, and has from time to time kept its rank on the stage.

In the month of March, Garrick revived Shakespeare's play of *Cymbeline*, with considerable alterations made by himself. Of the

original Doctor Johnson, says, " It has many " just sentiments, some natural dialogue, and " some pleasing scenes, but they are obtained " at the expence of incongruity. To remark " the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the " conduct, the confusion of the names, and " and manners of the different times, and the " impossibility of the events in any system of " life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting " imbecillity, upon faults too evident for detec- " tion, and too gross for aggravation."

THIS, without doubt, is a judgement pronounced with severity, but, unfortunately, it cannot be refuted. The unities of action, time, and place, are almost always violated by Shakespeare: His superior genius gave him a right to be his own legislator, but there are two rules indispensably necessary to every mode of composition

composition. Aristotle observes, that in all objects of large dimension, there is no kind of beauty, because the several parts are seen in a slow progress, from one to the other, and, by consequence, the imagination cannot form a perfect idea of the whole; as when we survey a monstrous animal that covers a hundred furlongs in length. In like manner, a regular drama should be so constructed, that we may without difficulty comprehend the whole. This the great critic calls, εὐσύνοπτον, an easy view of the whole. He requires, moreover, such a frame and texture of the fable, as may be recollected without fatiguing the memory, and to this, he gives the name of εὐμνημόνευτον, or a clear and easy recollection. These two essentials Shakespeare has observed, even in the plays, where the three unities are neglected, such as *Lear*, *Richard*, and *Macbeth*. In the

play now before us, all is in confusion, a wild chaos of heterogeneous matter. The poet may be said to have placed in view a monster fifty furlongs in length. And yet Garrick thought fit to revive this play, because he knew, that, amidst all its imperfections, a number of detached beauties would occur, to surprize and charm the imagination.

About a month before the close of this season, Foote complained, that he was likely to pass an idle summer, as he could not obtain a licence to perform, as he had usually done, at the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. A man, who had a pack of dancing dogs had been before him at the Lord Chamberlain's Office. In this distress, Foote proposed that we should enter into partnership for the summer, and for that purpose Garrick let his play-house at a moderate

moderate price. This Writer produced the comedy of *All in the Wrong*, and two farces, *The Citizen* and *Old Maid*. Foote acted some of his old parts, but was not ready with any thing new. Notwithstanding this non-performance of his promise, Foote received somewhat above three hundred pounds for his half-share, and the two managers closed their cam- in the most amicable manner.

September 1761 to June 1762.

MR. SHERIDAN, who had, for many years, managed the Dublin theatre, found it impossible to withstand Barry and Woodward, proprietors of a new house in Crow Street. He resigned his station in Ireland, and entered into an engagement for the season at Drury Lane. In the month of October he began his career in the character af *Hamlet*. He played such capital parts

parts as he chose, and often acted in conjunc- with Garrick.

TOWARDS the end of November, he brought forward a tragedy, intitled *The Earl of Essex*, written by Mr. Brooke, the author of *Gustavus Vasa*. Colley Cibber's remarks * on *The Earl of Essex*, have been already cited. Another play on the same subject, by Henry Jones, had been acted at Covent Garden, but it was in vain to look there for the beauties of stile, or an improvement of the plot. Mr. Brooke thought proper to depart from the strict line of history, and, thereby, gave his piece an air of novelty. The sentiments are natural and characteristic. The diction, without being too poetical, is florid, elegant, and often sublime. A joke of Dr. Johnson was in

* See Page 162.

circulation

circulation at the time. Sheridan, who admired the composition of his friend, was loud in its praise, and, being desired to give a specimen, repeated a passage, that ended with the following line:

Who rules o'er freemen, should himself be free.

Johnson laughed, and said this is good logick:

Who drives fat oxen, should himself be fat.

This is similar to Foote's pleasantry, when he heard Mrs. Cibber sing,

The roses will bloom, when there's peace in the breaft.

He walked into the green room, singing

The turtles will coo, when there's pease in their craws.

Mr.

Mr. Brooke's verse, however, is a good one, and his play may be fairly ranked among our good tragedies.

After Christmas, Garrick, Sheridan, and Mrs. Cibber, united their powers with a spirit of mutual emulation. Garrick had formerly acted *King John*, but now resigned it to Sheridan: he took the part of the *Bastard*, and and Mrs. Cibber that of *Lady Constance*. All three exerted themselves to the utmost stretch of their abilities. Sheridan had great merit in *King John*, particularly in his scene with *Hubert*, in the third act, when he gives orders for the destruction of *Young Arthur*. But Mrs. Cibber eclipsed all competition; her grief for the loss of her son, her rage, her tenderness, rising alternately, and often blended in one mixed emotion, penetrated every heart, and

and melted every eye in tears. Her voice, though often felt on former occasions, was never expanded to such a degree. It was harmony in an uproar: in fact, she was the admiration of the public. The play, however, was not acted more than five or six times. Sheridan imputed this to Garrick's jealousy, and from that time acted no more.

Mr. Whitehead, after two successful tragedies, thought it time to pay his compliments to the comic muse. In the month of February he produced *The School for Lovers*, formed on a dramatic piece of Monsieur Fontinelle, and by him called *Le Testamonent*, or, as we say, The Last Will and Testament. Whoever has a mind to see an examination of Fontinelle's comedies, will find it done by a critic

critic * of the first taste and judgement. Mr. Whitehead's fable is conducted with skill; but after all, it is a sentimental comedy. Those, who expected laughter holding both his sides, were disappointed. And yet the play is worthy of him, who, in his dedication to Fontinelle, called himself a lover of simplicity.

Soon after the run of the foregoing play, Dr. Hawksworth favoured the public with a whimsical, but beautiful little piece, called *Edgar and Emmeline.* The machinery of fairies, who direct every thing, is well managed, and by the addition of musical interludes, the piece afforded an elegant entertainment to a number of crowded audiences.

* See Dr. Hurd, on the Provinces of the Drama.

On

On Mrs. Pritchard's benefit-night, was acted an interlude between the play and the farce, written by Garrick, called the *Farmer's Return from London.* It is a well imagined satire on the manners of the metropolis. The *Farmer* (performed by Garrick), relates to his wife all that he has seen in town. The scribblers in newspapers, the coronation, the lord mayor's show, and the playhouses, pass in review before him. He saw a play too *(The School for Lovers)* and thought it pure stuff; but the critics disliked it, because, they wanted to laugh, and were ready to cry. A critic, he says, is a man that won't sin himself, and hates those that can. The piece was much applauded, and hotly called for, several nights during the remainder of the season.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

COLMAN'S *Farce of the* MUSICAL LADY—*Observations on it—A Party formed against* GARRICK, *on the Subject of Half-price—The Male-contents were for establishing on every Night, except during the Run of a New Pantomime—Violent Riot in the Playhouse—*GARRICK *obliged to submit—The like Attempt on the following Night at Covent-Garden—The Two Ring-Leaders taken up by* Lord MANSFIELDS *Warrant—That Nobleman, after giving them a severe Reproof, prevails on* Mr. BEARD *to drop his Prosecution—The Two Culprits dismissed, and the Riots end—*MALLET'S *Tragedy of* ELVIRA—*That Writer's Stratagem to get his Play acted—He practises a Delusion on* GARRICK—*Remark of* Dr. WARBURTON *on* Mr. MALLET—ELVIRA, *little more than a Translation of* INES DE CASTRO, *by* LA MOTTE—*It was acted Nine Nights, and then expired—The Season closes—*GARRICK, *in the Summer, forms a Resolution to visit the Continent, and absent himself for some time from the Stage—He sets out with* Mrs. GARRICK, *on the* 16*th* September, 1763, *and leaves the Management of* Drury-Lane *to* Mr. LACY, *and to* GEORGE GARRICK.

September 1762 to June 1763.

IN the beginning of December Mr. Colman produced a farce, called the *Musical Lady*. This piece

piece had peculiar good luck. It was part of the *Jealous Wife*, till Garrick saw it, and discarded it as mere *surplusage*. It was thus reserved for a better fate. The folly of pretending to a fine ear, without a true taste, is what the author exposes to ridicule. When we add, that King, Yates, and Miss Pope, played the leading characters, nobody will wonder that the piece, supported further by intrinsic merit, had great success.

GARRICK, in the course of his management, had every reason to be happy in his situation, if we except the disturbance about the *Chinese Festival*. Nothing occurred to give him the smallest discontent; during the whole time he had enjoyed halcyon days. As an actor, he was, with good reason, the idol of the people, and as a manager, to give variety

to the public entertainments was his grand study. Dramatic poetry, it may be fairly said, was rising every day to higher perfection. He basked in the sunshine of public admiration, but he was at times molested by the enemies, that are ever sure to be provoked by superior merit; and malice and envy were incessantly at work.

Sole sub ardenti resonant arbusta cicadis.

Soon after Christmas clouds began to gather, and storms and tempests lowered over Drury-Lane playhouse. It happened about the beginning of 1763, that the manager gave notice of a new regulation, in consequence of which, during the run of a new play, no half-price was to be admitted. The mal-contents thought this a good ground for a riot; they did not consider

consider that the expence attending a new production, is often very considerable, and with the addition of the author's benefit-nights, amounts to a large sum. This, undoubtedly, was sufficient to justify the managers, but reason with the lovers of tumult is a feather in the scale. In the beginning of January, Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, with alterations by Benjamin Victor, at that time treasurer to the house, and a most worthy man, was presented with good success, and no half-price was received. This was deemed a good opportunity for a quarrel, and a party was accordingly formed. On the tenth night of acting this altered play, the *malevoli* determined to begin their attack. A gentleman of the name of Fitzpatrick, who possessed great taste and learning, put himself at the head of the conspiracy. He had

been well acquainted with Mr. Garrick, and for some time professed himself one of his warm admirers. What occasioned a total revolution in his way of thinking never transpired. Whatever was the motive, it kindled a violent spirit of animosity, insomuch, that he, who had been always distinguished by the most placid manners, became on a sudden the fomenter and leader of a tumultuous riot. His associate in the plot was ——; I forget his name; he was a haberdasher in Cheapside. This man had found means, some two or three years before, to wriggle himself into favour with Mr. Garrick. On what their intimacy was founded, no man could tell, except that the haberdasher had a glib tongue, and was every way qualified to fetch and carry such tales as he knew Garrick loved to hear. He was, in fact, one of those whom Shakespeare

speare calls, *Smiling pick-thanks and whisperers of news.* Fitzpatrick had the pen of an elegant writer, and, knowing Garrick well, he was able to point his malevolence at the vulnerable parts. He published a number of essays in *The Craftsman*, all calculated to alarm the quick sensibility of the manager. On those occasions the haberdasher was sure to pay Garrick a visit, with seeming friendship, and, after condoling with him, he went to his favourite author with a number of hints for farther malice. At length, however, Garrick found, that his small-ware friend had been, during all their intimacy, practising *delusions*; and, being capable of such duplicity, he never cared how much the *deluded* was tormented by his sinister practices. He was at length fully detected, and Garrick dismissed him from his train, with as little cere-

mony as he would discharge an under actor. This man, in a fit of resentment, acquired a degree of honesty, for he was from that time an open enemy. He lacqueyed after Mr. Fitzpatrick, and was proud to attend him in the pit on the night of the riot. The terms of the new doctrine, professed by the discontented party, were carefully circulated in news-papers and hand-bills, importing, that half-price should be taken on every night throughout the season, except the run of a new pantomime. And thus, according to these critics, Harlequin was to frisk, and frolick, and leap over the heads of the best writers of the age. To enforce this rule, the band of play-house legislators went, by compact, in crowds to the theatre, and took possession of the pit, and sent their hirelings to the galleries. As soon as the curtain was drawn

drawn up, a violent uproar resounded from all quarters. Garrick came forth to appease the tumult, but in vain. An orator stood up in the pit, and, after stating his imperious demand, insisted on an immediate answer. The manager attempted to discuss the question, but was told, that he must immediately comply; *yes* or *no* was all they wanted. That not being done, the noise broke out with increasing fury; Garrick was driven off the stage; and the play was not suffered to proceed.

On the following night, the *malevoli* returned to the charge. They called aloud for Garrick. As soon as he appeared, Mr. Fitzpatrick, to the astonishment of all his acquaintance, stood up, and put a laconic question—"*Will you, or will you not, allow ad-*

" mittance at half-price after the third
" act of every piece, except a new panto-
" mime, during its run in the first win-
" ter?" Garrick had settled his measures. Being overruled by the advice of Mr. Lacy, his partner, Garrick replied in the politest manner, and the rioters carried their point.

An anecdote relating to Mr. Moody, who was a most natural and excellent comic actor, must not be omitted. During the disturbance on the preceding night, he saw a man setting fire to the scenes, and, immediately seizing him by the hand, was so happy as to hinder that horrid design from being carried into execution. This was a material service, even to the enraged party, who might have been involved in a capital offence; but in the opinion of John Bull it was a crime,

for

for which they required an apology. Moody was hotly called for: he did not hesitate; conscious of his good intentions in the part he had acted, he made his appearance on the stage. His judges in the pit ordered him to ask pardon: to this imperious command, he answered with great presence of mind, "Gentlemen, if by hindering the house from "being burnt to the ground, and saving ma-"ny of your lives, I have given you cause of "displeasure, I ask your pardon." This was deemed an aggravation, and the furious legislators commanded him to ask pardon on his knees, *Down on your knees* was the universal cry. Mr. Moody felt the indignity, and, with the spirit of a man, told them, "Gentlemen, I will not degrade myself so "low, even in your opinion: by such an "act, I should be an abject wretch, unfit

"ever

"ever to appear before you again." He spoke these words with firmness, and, having made his bow, walked off the stage. Garrick received him with open arms: he applauded him for his due sense of honour. The riot did not subside, until the manager went on, and, being ordered to dismiss Moody for his insolence, he gave his word that Moody, though a most useful actor, should not perform any part on his stage, as long as he remained under their displeasure. He then retired, and, once more embracing Moody, assured him that his salary should be regularly continued.

In this manner the tumult was appeased, and the play was acted without further interruption. On the following night, the confederates, flushed with victory, were determined

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to reap fresh laurels at Covent Garden theatre. They assembled accordingly, and, before the play began, called with vociferation for Mr. Beard, then one of the patentees. That gentleman obeyed their command; and, being required to submit to the terms imposed on the other house; his answer was that the opera of *Artaxerxes*, which was to be presented that very night, was prepared with great expence, and he therefore could not comply with so unreasonable a demand. A dreadful riot was the consequence; benches, girandoles, and scenes, were laid in ruin. Mr. Beard was properly advised, to seek redress in due course of law, and, accordingly, on the next day he sued out the chief justice's warrant against the ring-leaders of the fray. Mr. Fitzpatrick and the haberdasher were taken into custody, and conducted to Lord Mansfield's house

house in Bloomsbury Square. His lordship heard Beard's deposition, and being acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, he turned to Mr. Fitzpatrick, saying to him, "you, Sir, look so like a gentleman, that I am astonished to see a person of your appearance involved in such a breach of the peace." He then went on in that dignified manner, which was peculiar to him, representing to the culprits the nature of the crime, with which they were charged. He told them, that if a life had been lost in the fray, the law would pronounce them both guilty of murder. He soon perceived that his eloquence made a due impression, and then told the prisoners, that, on their giving a solemn promise that they would never again be guilty of the like offence, he would recommend pacific measures to Mr. Beard. That gentleman acceded to his lordship's advice,

and

and agreed to drop the prosecution. All playhouse disturbances were, in this manner, brought to a conclusion. Covent Garden was left at liberty to proceed on the old system, while Garrick, the great patron of the drama, was obliged to submit to the law of the conquerors.

In this situation, he had the good sense to appear perfectly resigned to the will of the theatrical dictators. As soon as the damages done to his theatre were repaired, he brought forward the tragedy of *Elvira*, written by Mr. Mallet. The artifice, by which that gentleman ensured a favourable reception of his play, presents a very extraordinary anecdote. He made his approach to the manager, in a sly insinuating manner: knowing that his plays of *Eurydice* and *Alfred* had not added

to

to his fame, he thought it necessary, on this occasion, to work by stratagem. It is well known that the Dutchess of Marlborough, by her will, left to Glover and Mallet, the sum of a thousand pounds, as a reward for writing the life of the duke, but not in verse. Glover renounced the legacy; Mallet received it, declaring his intention to execute the work. From that time he gave himself the air of being deeply engaged in his undertaking. He paid a visit to Garrick, and, in a piteous tone complained of the fatigue he underwent in preparing that important business. He talked much of his plan, and added, "I have found "an opportunity to introduce you Mr. Gar- "rick, in a way, that, I believe, you will not "dislike." Introduce me, Sir, said Garrick: what room can there be for me in the history of so great a man? Leave that to me, replied Mallet:

Mallet; in my review of the arts and sciences that flourished in Queen Ann's reign, I have a nich in poet's corner for you. The author proceeded to observe, that he was overwhelmed with labour, and, to relieve his mind, amused himself with writing a tragedy. He then produced *Elvira* out of his pocket. Garrick received it with open arms, pleased with the idea of having a place in the temple of fame. The life of the Duke of Marlborough was universally expected. Mallet expressly says, that "Having found, by frequent expe-
"rience, how much the mind is apt to flag
"under the same kind of employment, too long
"and too uniformly continued, he had an in-
"clination to try whether a different sort of
"labour might not be, at the same time, a
"sort of relief. To this experiment only, the
"reader is indebted for the pleasure or distaste

"of

" of *Elvira*." He continued on all occasions to propagate an account of his assiduity and constant labour in a work, which he said would crown the duke and himself with immortal fame. This vain boasting reached the ear of Dr. Warburton, and drew from him a severe remark. " In his life of Lord Bacon, " Mallet forgot that that extraordinary man " was a philosopher; and probably, in his " promised history, he will forget that the " Duke of Marlborough was a great general " officer." Mallet, in fact, did forget it; for it appeared after his death, which happened in April 1765, that after all his boasted labour, he had not writ a single line.

In the mean time, the deceit practised upon Garrick had its effect. He produced *Elvira* to the best advantage. He acted the part of

Don

Don Alonzo, and Mrs. Cibber that of *Elvira*, both exerting their powers in the service of the author. Mallet, in a postscript to his play, acknowledges his obligations to Monsieur de la Motte; an original genius, who saw most things in a new light, and poetry in particular, as may be seen in his translation, or rather his imitation, of Homer. His tragedy of *Ines de Castro* is founded on an historical event, long since celebrated by Camoens in his famous epic poem, called the Lusiad, of which the late Mr. Mickle favoured the public with a most elegant translation. With such a performance as *Ines de Castro* before him, Mallet could not miss his way. It must, however, be observed, that the fate of *Elvira* is foreseen in the very first act. It there appears that she is clandestinely married to *Don Pedro*, heir apparent to the crown of Portugal: of course it is seen at once, that the designs of the

king, *Don Alonzo*, and his queen, to dispose of the young prince to *Almeyda*, can never take effect. The monarch has wrong notions of royalty: in his opinion, the sovereign cannot by his prerogative act with lenity; and temper justice with mercy. The character of the queen is painted in the most glaring colours of cruelty and horror. *Elvira* falls a victim to the rage of a disappointed woman, but, that event being long expected, the catastrophe made no impression. Mallet was supposed to be, throughout the play, offering incence to Lord Bute, who had, at that time, concluded a peace with France, on terms, which, according, to the politicians of the day, were falsely thought disadvantageous to this country. Of course *Elvira* laboured through many difficulties, and, after the ninth night, never appeared again.

THE

THE differences between Garrick and Sheridan still subsisted, but Mrs. Sheridan stood high in the manager's esteem. The excellent novel of *Sidney Biddulph* gave him a just idea of her talents; and, when she tendered her comedy, called *The Discovery*, he received it with every mark of favour. It is one of the best sentimental plays in our language; it abounds with moral sentiments, and strokes of the pathetic artfully intermixed. *Sir Harry* and *Lady Flutter* give life and spirit to the piece. To them may be added Sir *Anthony Branville*, a solemn coxcomb of antiquated manners, performed by Garrick in a whimsical and entertainig manner. It was the last part he ever acted in a new play.

FROM this time Garrick shewed no symptom of discontent. He never seemed to be

chagrined by the trouble he had been obliged to encounter. He went on as usual, repeating from time to time his best characters, and closed the season with all the appearance of a man that felt no kind of resentment. There is reason, however, to think that his temper was soured by the injuries he had received. We find, that in the summer, he formed a design to visit the continent. He was, moreover, encouraged by his physicians, who told him that he stood in need of air and exercise. They were further of opinion, that Mrs. Garrick's health would receive great benefit from the waters of Barrege. By this advice all doubts were removed. The expedition to foreign parts was finally settled. On the 15th September 1763, Garrick set off for Dover, leaving his brother George his substitute, to act for him in concert with Mr. Lacy. His

enemies

enemies triumphed on the occasion; and the public was left to cast a mournful look at the setting of the theatrical sun.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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